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Women and minorities badly paid, report reveals

Marian Van Til

OTTAWA — The first Employment Equity Act Annual Report, released late last month by Minister of Employment and Immigration Barbara McDougall, and Monique Vezina, minister of State for Employment and Immigration Canada, shows that full-time working women are still paid only 70 per cent of the average salary of men who work full-time. The average salary for aboriginal peoples, visible minorities and disabled people are also lower than those of the "mainstream" male workforce. And women who are also members of any of the other minority groups get hit twice in terms of low wages.

Other findings indicate that the number of members of "visible minorities" in the work force increased by almost five per cent last year. But persons with disabilities are still not being hired to the extent that they could be nor, often, paid as much as able-bodied people in the same jobs.

Photo: EIC

Monique Vezina, Minister of State for Employment and Immigration.

Equal opportunity

The Employment Equity Act was proclaimed in August 1986. Its purpose "is to achieve equality in the work place so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and ... to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and persons who are, because of their race or colour, in a visible minority in Canada ...."

The act requires "federally regulated" employers with 100 or more employees (banks, airlines, trucking, shipping and bus and rail lines, communications companies including Bell Canada, Canada Post, pipeline companies, flour and feed mills, commercial grain elevators, the nuclear industry, the National Gallery) to "eliminate discriminatory practices, take special measures to achieve a representative work force, and submit annual reports on their progress," says the Ministry of Employment and Immigration. "Failure to report could result in penalties up to $50,000."

There were 380 such employers in 1987; information from 363 of those, covering 586,861 employees (4.2 per cent of the Canadian work force) is included in this first report's findings.

Four target groups

The report analyses the position of the four designated groups — women, aboriginals, the disabled and visible minorities — from two perspectives: the position of each group within the Canadian labour force as a whole and the position of each in the work force governed by the Employment Equity Act.

The designated groups make up over half of the population of Canada; however, "all of these groups have a higher rate of unemployment than that of the total population," says the report. Women make up slightly more than 50 per cent of the Canadian population; aboriginal peoples, 2.8 per cent; people with disabilities, 13.2 per cent; visible minorities, 6.3 per cent. About 9 per cent of women are also members of one or more of the other designated groups.

(See also reports on p. 6 of this issue)

Dinosaurs as a test of faith

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — What you believe about dinosaurs is a good test of what you believe about the Christian faith, say leaders of the Institute for Creation Research, located in San Diego, California.

Everyone accepts as fact that dinosaurs once lived and are now extinct. The crucial question is how long ago they lived and died out.

The standard scientific belief is that dinosaurs lived hundreds of millions of years ago. They came into being through evolutionary processes and died out because of major changes in climate and a decline in the vast swamps and jungles that were vital to their lives. This kind of view is promoted in displays of dinosaur bones in museums, such as the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, and in popular children's picture books.

A recent discovery by Canadian scientists of the largest known dinosaur remains in Asia, for example, was interpreted in terms of this view. A news report says, "The animal was about 98 feet (30 metres) long. It munched its way across the jungles and swamps of what is now arid desert in China's far northwest 160 million years ago."

Not so, says Paul S. Taylor, writing in a recent issue of the newsletter "Impact," produced by the Institute for Creation Research. Dinosaurs are described in the Bible as animals still living at that time, says Taylor. They are described perfectly in Job 40, which was written soon after the great flood of Noah, about 4,000 years ago.

Taylor and others have produced movies and written children's books, among which are the "Dinosaur ABC's Activity Book," to teach children what they consider to be the biblical truth about dinosaurs. You can also buy their T-shirt with a picture of a big dino and the words, "Behemoth — Job 40:15."

The scientists at the Institute are eager to find evidence that dinosaurs are not prehistoric and that people were living on earth at the same time the dinosaurs lived. They thought they had solid evidence of that with tracks of dinos and people right together in the dried river bed of the Paluxy River in Texas, but two years ago they publicly acknowledged that they had been mistaken about that.

Many evangelical Christian scientists, including members of the Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation writing in their quarterly journal *Perspectives on Science and Faith,* do not accept either the young-earth or the evolutionistic view. They agree that dinosaurs may have lived something like 160 million years ago, but firmly insist that, like all creatures, dinosaurs were created by God.

The writings of all those who wish to teach us about how dinosaurs came to exist, and how long ago they lived, agree implicitly that how you answer the dinosaur riddle depends on whether you accept information only from science, or only from the Bible, or from both.

Thinkbit

"I cannot be the only reader who has wondered why God, having given St. Paul so many gifts, withheld from him what would to us seem so necessary for the first Christian theologian — the gift of lucidity and orderly exposition."

From: "Reflections on the Psalms" by C.S. Lewis

Photo: Cecilia van Wylick

The dinosaur Tyrannosaurus rex.

In this issue:

Addiction to sex is also found in churches ..... p. 8
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Dean McRae writes about a new sense of masculinity ..... p. 12
Bert Hielema heard lectures on his favourite topic: Christianity, ecology and the covenant ..... p. 13

Next week:

Two Edmonton women describe the life of a sister in the faith — Anna Maria van Schuurman.
Bert Hielema concludes his report and reflections on Christianity, ecology and the covenant.

Unemployment insurance moves from deficit to surplus

Stan de Jong

OTTAWA — Every time Canadian wage earners enter a new year, they expect to see the familiar increases in payroll deductions: income tax, the compulsory premiums for the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), and unemployment insurance (UI).

As of Jan. 1, though income tax and CPP deductions may have risen again, the UI premium rate has fallen.

In 1989, employees will pay $1.95 per $100 of insurable earnings. In addition, their employers will pay $2.73 per $100 of employee earnings (1.4 times the employee rate). This is a reduction of 17 per cent in premium rates.

Said Barbara McDougall, minister of employment and immigration, "As was foreseen last year, we have eliminated the cumulative deficit in the UI account, which stood at $4.5 billion at the end of 1983, and we have reduced the premium rates for 1989."

The minister also announced that in 1989 the maximum weekly UI benefit will increase to $363 from $339 last year (a rise of 7.1 per cent).

Setting UI rates

The Unemployment Insurance Act requires the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission to set premium rates for each year, based on "the state of the UI account and future expectations." Actual premium rates charged to employees and employers are determined by using a "statutory premium rate" as a reference point.

The statutory premium rate for 1989 was used to estimate whether there would be a surplus or deficit in the UI account at the end of the year. In case of a surplus, the UI act requires the commission to set an actual premium rate that is lower than the statutory premium rate. In case of a deficit, the actual premium rate would be increased.

The statutory rate for 1989 was calculated to be 2.149 per $100 of insurable earnings. Based on present projections, this rate would have left the account with a surplus of over $1.9 billion at the end of 1989. With the rate set at $1.95 per $100 of insurable earnings, the cumulative surplus at the end of the year has been projected at $877 million, up from an estimated $422 million surplus at the end of 1988.

McDougall explained that "it was decided to follow a prudent course in setting the 1989 premium rates, in order to provide a reasonable surplus margin in the UI account."

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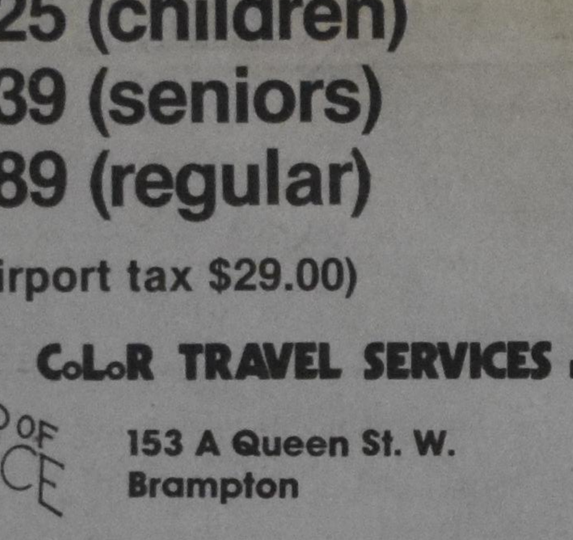

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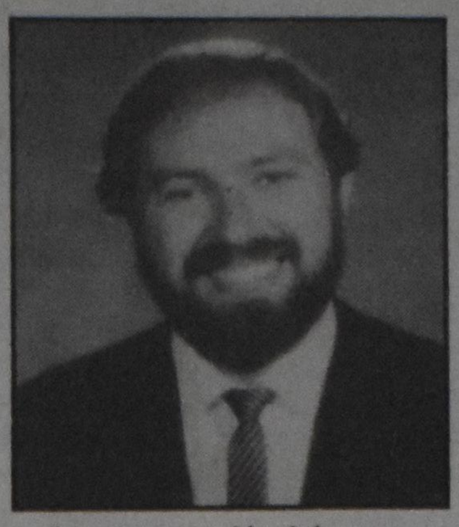
BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Syd Hielema, Clarence Joldersma, Jake Kuiken.



Managing cows

Last summer I had the opportunity to accompany a local veterinarian on his rounds. That experience was an extremely fascinating and thought-provoking one. One farmer had some calves that needed dehorning and extra teats clipped off. Another farmer had one cow with an abscess in her foot and another cow with symptoms of dysentery. A third farmer had a cow that was due to calve in a few days and had developed mastitis, an inflammation of the udder which severely hampers normal milk production. Because the cow had mastitis the vet delivered the calf by Caeserean section. It was stillborn and the cow was "put to sleep" by lethal injection. As the veterinarian and I travelled from farm to farm discussing the various cases of the day, a deeper issue concerning animal care surfaced.

Many of the treatments that day were for situations apparently caused — directly or indirectly — by humans. For example, the dysentery symptoms were related to a high protein diet geared to extra milk production. Similarly, the mastitis was associated with a new technique in udder care. Why did certain problems faced by these farmers appear self-induced? Is there something about certain "progressive" methods of dairy farming that causes stress to the cows? Do some practices of farmers not meet the needs of cows as creatures? How should a dairy cow be treated if it, too, is a creature of the Lord?

How far can we push?

Certain "progressive" management techniques seem to cause physiological stress to cows. Farmers realize, of course, that cows must be comfortable and content in order to produce well; thus management techniques must not violate this principle. On the other hand, management decisions may cause longer-term stresses that do not show up immediately.

To try to achieve ever higher production levels may have harmful effects in the long term. According to Harry Cook, professor of biology at The King's College in Edmonton, "Under good management, the modern dairy cow operates at the peak of its physical potential. To expect the animal to perform at an even higher level may invite earlier breakdown." In other words, cows have limits; to exceed them can cause long-term stresses that will show up later. Then the management technique designed for higher production comes back to haunt the farmer and his cow.

An example from my day with the vet is a case in point. Mastitis, a costly udder disorder, needs to be treated with an antibiotic to kill the bacteria. Treatment, instead of prevention, however, results in loss of milk production.

A new management technique for mastitis is to treat with antibiotics the "dry" (non-lactating), pregnant cows. This prevents mastitis since the antibiotic prevents any bacterial infection from setting in. In the short term, this seems to be a good management technique, for it lowers the "somatic cell count" (a count of body cells in the milk that indicates the presence of infection or inflammation), prevents mastitis, and increases production potential in the subsequent lactation.

A costly trick

A drawback, however, is that the cow's defense system is duped into thinking that no infections can set in, and results in a greatly lowered production of white blood cells (hence the very low "somatic cell count"). This allows certain yeasts to infect the udder and cause a yeast version of mastitis. Since antibiotics are effective only against certain bacteria, they can do nothing to stop this form of mastitis (or the mastitis caused by bacteria not sensitive to the type of antibiotic used).

Thus, the management decision to prevent mastitis and increase production could come back in the longer term to cause a more severe form of this affliction. If that occurs, a "progressive" management technique has come back to haunt the farmer and cause stress to the cow.

A second, clearer example is the use of the hormone BST (Bovine Somatotropin) to increase milk production. A daily injection of BST increases a cow's milk production by about 15 per cent. This has side effects in the cow, however. It shows up, for example, in breeding difficulties. The cow is producing beyond her natural biological potential and limits; she is like a machine pressed beyond the limit for short-term economic gain. This also comes back to haunt the farmer and the cow.

There are many modern management techniques that a farmer can decide to implement. It seems to me, however, that many of these "progressive" management decisions are implemented primarily for short-term economic reasons. Cows, of course, are not pets, and dairy farming is not an interesting hobby; economics should play a legitimate role. But neither is dairy farming a factory process that uses nonliving, inanimate machines to produce an economic product, milk. Cows are living creatures with built-in biological limits; they should not be treated as if they were machines. Management decisions must recognize that biological limits should come before economic advantages. Only then is the cow treated as a creature of the Lord.

Clarence Joldersma teaches science at Smithville Christian High School, Smithville, Ont.

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

Marx's prophecies came closer to fulfilment this week in our country when competition again shrunk a couple of sizes. Ward Air became Canadian National, Texaco became Esso, and as far as the pasteurized liquid that goes under the name of beer in this country is concerned, there too was another fusion of marketforces. And then there is that Australian Murdoch who is buying half the world and who will pretty soon control all print media. There were some optimistic and naive souls who said that all this wheeling and dealing was still conditional upon government approval. They forgot, of course, that this is a pro-business, true-blue, banker-friendly Conservative government.

★★★★

The nation's capital is quiet with members of parliament being at home, but there was the popular guessing game in Ottawa as well as in other regions of the country about the eventual make-up of Monsieur's cabinet. Cabinet, under Monsieur's administration, has played an ever diminishing role in the political decision-making process. The number of real power brokers is limited to only a very few inner-circle ministers.

★★★★

It is not only yours truly who is worried about the size of our national debt. It is no secret that the International Monetary Fund has warned our government about its seemingly ever-increasing debt, which becomes ever harder and more difficult to service.

★★★★

Wilhelmus Maria VanderZalm had to face down another rebellion in his party. One of his backbenchers — Stephen Rogers — was threatening to cross the floor of the provincial legislature with other disenchanted Socred members. Wilhelmus does not enjoy easy sailing in spite of his almost blinding 1,000-watt smile.

★★★★

The police force in Edmonton is an example to us all in the exercise of duty and discipline. They have decided to crack down on jaywalkers. So far, they have laid almost 600 charges against practitioners of evil and danger in the fair city of Edmonton. It is good to know that there is at least one place in our country where you can't fool around with the law. I bet spitting on the sidewalk is next on their program, or perhaps they will close in on people who copy Hockey Night in Canada on their VCR, which, we all know, is strictly prohibited.

★★★★

Ontario Hydro deals with big numbers. The cost of its nuclear power station under construction in Darlington keeps expanding like the size of a pregnant elephant. Although I have never seen a pregnant elephant, I find the metaphor expressive of Ontario Hydro's cost estimation. That cost is already $725 million more than it was last year. A bigger increase than going from a size 40 to a size 41 belt, as I sometimes do.

★★★★

The two Meech Lake hold-outs — Premier McKenna and Premier Filmon — had a friendly chat together, but discovered that their opposition did not have too terribly much in common.

★★★★

Interest rates keep crawling up! Not much, but steadily. The government wants to curb inflation and is willing to let unemployment rise higher. The rate of unemployment is about eight per cent, which may not say too much as a cold, bloodless statistic, but it means that about one million Canadians are not gainfully employed.

★★★★

Students in Seoul staged demonstrations the size and violence of which could scare a general of a tank division. There is a pronounced Yankee-go-home tendency in that mass hysteria. It is sometimes difficult for people to see on which side their bread is buttered. Many American soldiers gave their lives not that long ago so that these hotheads could taste freedom. History is probably not taught very well at the University at Seoul. Perhaps the only thing they teach there is how to sell cars for American dollars.

★★★★

The Polish government and the Solidarity movement have started very tenuous negotiations about possible and eventual recognition of the labour movement. How ironic when union busting is all the rage in the Western world.

★★★★

Cardinals who have exceeded the age of four score are not eligible to vote for a new pope. No charter of rights in the Vatican, eh? Pope John Paul II has refused to suspend that rule.

★★★★

Another country that lives way beyond its means is Israel, where of course military spending sucks the life out of the national economy, with annual inflation rising to about a staggering 20 per cent. Israel receives about $5 billion financial support from the U.S. and the Jewish diaspora.

★★★★

Former Belgian Prime Minister Paul Vanden Boeynants has been kidnapped by some idiotic leftist organization, which asked $750,000 for his return. At the time of this writing there were concerns about the life of Mr. VandenBoeynants. Japanese leftists threaten to disrupt the coming funeral of Hirohito with violence. Most Western countries will be represented at that funeral by high-level delegations in spite of Veteran protests.

★★★★

We owe the name of our country to Jacques Cartier who coined the word Canada. So many silly names were bandied about at the time of Confederation that a certain Thomas D'Arcy McGee stood up in the assembly and delivered himself of the following:

"One individual chooses Tuponia and another Hochelage, as a suitable name for the new nationality. Now I would ask any honourable member of this House how he would feel if he woke up some fine morning, and found himself instead of a Canadian, a Tuponian or Hochelagander. I think, sir, we may safely leave for the present the discussion of the name as well as the origin of the new system ...."

Well spoken, Thomas; but I know a few Canadians who could more appropriately be called Hochelaganders.

Carl Tuyl is pastor of the First Christian Reformed Church of Kingston, Ont.

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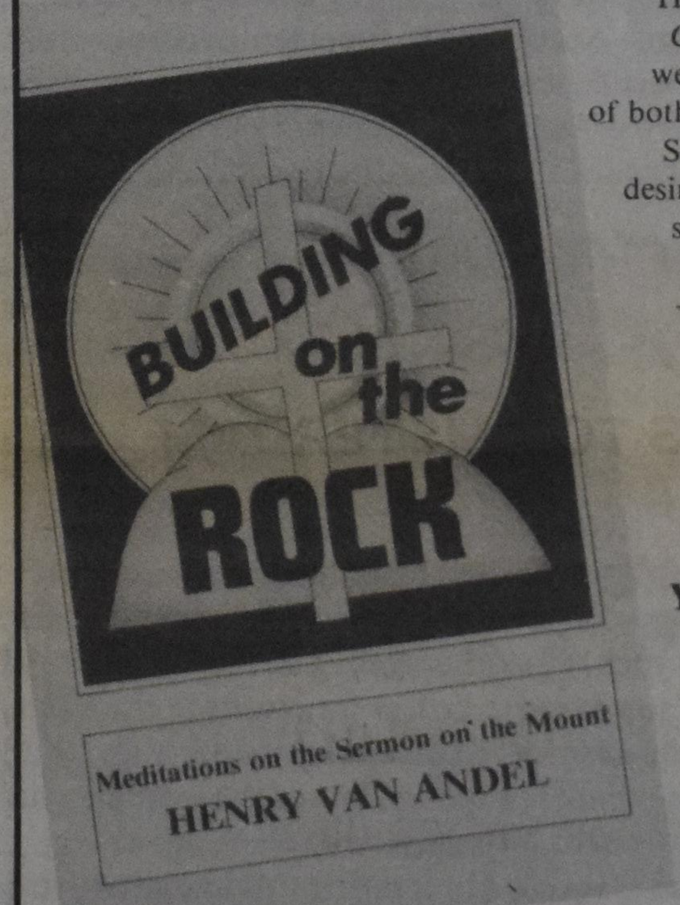

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Editorial

The *Westminster Catechism* on the new abortion drug

A non-surgical abortion method, developed and marketed in France, is being considered for North America. It's called RU 486. According to one scientist, "it makes the womb inhospitable" to the fertile egg or fetus so that it dies. A few days later the uterus either rejects the fetus or the mother is injected with prostaglandin, a substance present in the body in limited quantity, so that rejection is induced.

The process is somewhat painful, throws off a woman's menstrual cycle and causes bleeding for several days. But it ends an early pregnancy without the insertion of instruments that might do harm to the uterus. According to the scientist, the usefulness of this method is inversely related to the duration of the pregnancy. It's about 100 per cent effective five weeks after the last menstruation, but its effectiveness quickly goes down to 80 per cent at seven weeks.

Not surprising, pro-abortionists are in favour of legalizing a controlled use of this drug in North America. Equally not surprising, pro-life people are opposed and incensed at the thought of legalizing something that may develop into an over-the-counter type of abortion service. How does one picket a prescription?

The "caring" argument

When one hears pro-abortionists debate the use of RU 486 with pro-lifers, one gets the feeling that pro-life Christians are really a very uncaring bunch of people. Here's an alternative to surgical abortion that is supposed to be less traumatic to the woman, and pro-life people oppose it with the same gusto as they do abortion clinics. Don't they care for the welfare of the woman who "needs" an abortion? How can Christians be so insensitive?

Pro-abortionists succeed in creating this image of pro-life callousness by focusing exclusively on the woman.

Pro-life advocates, on the other hand, understand this technique very well and turn the tables on their opponents by focusing on the unborn fetus. What difference does it make to the fetus, they say, whether it gets sucked out by a hose or killed with a drug? Don't you care about the unborn baby, a person in the making? How insensitive can you be?

Perhaps the way the focus shifts between mother and fetus should tell us that the abortion issue is not going to be decided on the basis of who is the most caring and the most sensitive. Caring for whom? Sensitive to what? Some pro-choice people are wonderful friends and neighbours. Some pro-life people are equally supportive and helpful. If people need a place to stay when stuck on the highway during a snowstorm, they shouldn't necessarily pray that the Lord might lead them to a pro-life home.

The chief end

What then does decide the issue? The same thing that decides the issue of what the purpose of human life is. The *Westminster Catechism* begins with the question, "What is the chief end of man?" And the answer to that beautifully archaic wording rings out: "To glorify God and to enjoy him forever." See here the criterion for the use of the new drug RU 486.

To come back to that incredibly anti-creational statement of one scientist when interviewed on the use of the drug "it makes the womb inhospitable," how does that stack up against the chief end of man? Does the act of ridding the womb of a human life in progress enable that life to glorify God and to enjoy him forever? Does it enable the mother to do it as well?

Or to put it a little differently, when does the *Westminster Catechism* kick in for a fetus? After 20 weeks, after birth? According to Psalm 139 it goes into effect as soon as God's eyes see the unformed body being woven together in the secret place. Or as aesthetics professor Calvin Seerveld puts it in his just-released publication *On Being Human*, "to be a human creature is ... to live before the face of God." (p. 17) One could even make a case for saying that the purpose of one's life begins before conception, since "all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

Second thoughts

But how does one convince an unbeliever of the chief end of an unborn human life? It seems that there are times that one has to resort to the "caring" argument. Unbelievers do not suddenly lose their feelings for a new life, especially if that new life is within their own womb. Making their womb "inhospitable" should strike a chord of dissonance somewhere in their conscience.

Come to think of it, when stuck in a snowstorm, it is an extra bonus to end up in a home where hospitality is steeped in respect for the Giver of life, and where it feels as safe and protective as a womb is supposed to be, because the hosts are God-glorifying rather than self-serving.

Shalom to the Frisian couple

At the exhibition of Henk Krijger paintings at Redeemer College in Ancaster hangs a painting called *Friesland*. Very appropriately it's owned by a staunch Frisian-Canadian Wietse Posthumus and his of-Frisian-descent-American-born wife Kathryn. When aesthetics professor Cal Seerveld spoke about Krijger's art at the opening of the exhibition on Jan. 20, he made special mention of the painting *Friesland*. He called it one of Krijger's greatest artistic expressions of love.

The subject of the painting is a Frisian farmer and his wife overlooking their farm. Krijger painted four cows with udders so full they nearly touch the ground, said Seerveld (an actual viewing suggests this to be a Seerveldian hyperbole). Krijger also painted three sturdy trees, each with a nesting bird in it. The whole scene suggests shalom.

The farmer and his wife are dressed neatly and cleanly, of course. He smokes a pipe and she touches him approvingly on his shoulder and arm, as if to say, "Well done, thou good and faithful, tired servant."

There is a stiffness to the couple, though — the kind of stiffness that made life difficult at times for an artist like Henk Krijger. How he would have appreciated the reassuring touch of people in his Reformed community, saying to him, "Well done, thou good and faithful, tired servant." The four cows and three trees with three birds all in similar position suggest that this farmer's world lacks creativity and freedom. Is there a hint of smugness and focus on material possessions, or is this genuine shalom as promised by the Lord? Krijger seems to give them a the benefit of the doubt as he paints peace into their faces and posture.

For that reason, painting *Friesland* was an act of love on Krijger's part, said Seerveld. We can all learn from it. It takes a lot of grace to paint shalom around your detractors.

It's also humbling for some of us to know that it takes an extra dose of grace to be kind to Frisians, doesn't it? **BW**

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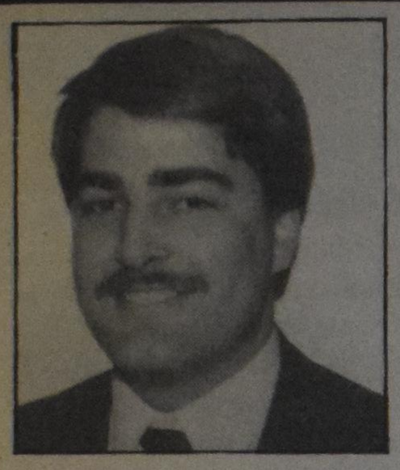


A birthday card

Heaven seems more a dream than a reality. Preachers and Christians who want to be relevant to today's world can often speak more passionately and convincingly about politics or the environment than about eternal life in heaven. Sometimes, though, heaven breaks through as a vivid reality. A preacher with 20 years of education and a detailed knowledge of the Bible may fail to communicate the joy and comfort of heaven. But a four-year-old boy with a yellow crayon helped to make heaven come alive for my wife and me.

On December 1, 1987, we became the parents of premature twin girls. Our daughter Rachel survived a deadly infection, and has developed perfectly in every way (though she does provide proof that children are born in sin). Our daughter Rebekah battled the same infection, and her lungs were damaged by the respirator. After five months of ups and downs, Rebekah died on May 12, Ascension Day. She had never left the hospital. We were holding her in our arms when she died.

On December 1, 1988, Rachel celebrated her first birthday. Several small children and their moms joined the little party at our home. Rachel received several cards, some of them homemade rather than Hallmark. One four-year-old named Michael had created a series of crayon pictures, each of which he explained.

The first page revealed a mother's tummy with baby Rachel inside. The next page showed Pastor Dave and Wendy holding Rachel. The third page depicted the minister at his desk, hard at work, with a picture of Rachel on his desk.

The fourth page was drawn entirely in bright yellow crayon. There were several golden figures, with a much larger golden figure in the centre. This large central figure was holding a small figure. The angels were gathered around God. And God was holding Rebekah.

Michael had not talked much about Rebekah, but he certainly must have listened to God's promises of eternal life. On Rachel's birthday, he knew that Rachel's mom and dad hold her and love her, so he drew that. On Rebekah's birthday, he knew that Rebekah's Father in heaven holds her and loves her. Though she died in our arms, she lives in the everlasting arms of God. So he drew that.

And as we looked at the card and heard the explanation, we knew that the everlasting arms were holding us, too.

Dave Feddes is pastor of Westmount Christian Reformed Church in Strathroy, Ont.

Letters

Premier VanderZalm deserves appreciation

I wish to respond to the article entitled "VanderZalm speech draws Christian ire," published in the January 6 issue of *Calvinist Contact* written by R.J. Klein.

The question to be asked is whether Mr. Klein listened to the tape of the speech the Premier gave at the Campus Crusade convention? Secondly, did Mr. Klein consider the occasion, why the Premier was asked to speak as well as the topic he was to speak on.

It would appear that Mr. Klein has done neither of the two. Nor did the media consider in their reporting the occasion and/or purpose. Surely the people gathered at the convention of Campus Crusade for Christ did not expect the Premier to speak on general economic conditions, good as they are in B.C., but undoubtedly they wanted to hear from the Premier how he envisioned, from a Christian perspective, building a stronger British Columbia and a stronger people to achieve that goal.

Close scrutiny

Undoubtedly, as a result of this speech and other statements made by the Premier previously, as they applied to his convictions, the Social Credit Government will be closely watched and monitored by the media. This is not bad in itself providing that the Christian community also recognize that even though a person may possess very strong Christian convictions and desire to live and implement those convictions, the "neutral" media usually look at things through a different set of glasses and as a result lose sight of what is really happening.

It should be noted, in contrast to what appears to be the observation of the news media and subsequently of the readership including Mr. Klein, that it was Premier VanderZalm who, when serving as Minister of Municipal Affairs previously, introduced changes to the building code in B.C. to enhance life for the handicapped people. And again, just last week, the Premier announced as the first province in Canada, an Advisory Committee to the Premier in an attempt to better address the needs of the various types of handicapped. This was a follow-up to a request made to every provincial premier by Rick Hansen while he was on tour.

Positive initiatives

Another very positive move by this government is the deinstitutionalizing of many of the mentally handicapped in our province. This is a move highly recommended by Christian organizations such as the Bethesda Home organization, operating in southwest B.C., simply because the staff at Bethesda have proven what can be achieved with people who would have spent their total lives in government institutions.

Which other provincial government in Canada, in a time of family breakdown when the children are most often the victims, has stressed the need for foster homes and adoption procedures as well as putting $20 million in a program entitled "Strengthening the Family"? This program is not only appreciated by many non-profit or Christian organizations, but is assisting the many volunteer agencies and organizations to provide counselling and help prior to family break up or unexpected pregnancies, etc.

Appreciation and prayer

I want to assure the readers of *Calvinist Contact* that, yes, Premier VanderZalm is a person with a lot of determination and vision. One of those visions is to provide an economic climate in our province which offers opportunities for all as well as employment for all those capable of doing a day's work. But I also wish to assure the readers that the Premier and his government are equally desirous to make life as good and pleasant for those who were born with a handicap or have been hit by the storms of life, and as a result have become incapacitated either physically or mentally.

I trust that as a Christian community we can appreciate those serving the public who are bold enough to express their convictions. I firmly believe that we have a responsibility to consult with them as well as pray for them.

Harry De Jong, M.L.A.
Central Fraser Valley
Victoria, B.C.

No longer "last year"

The impression created by the article entitled, "CPJ urged to 'shed the Christian rhetoric,'" (C.C. Jan. 13, 1989) and reprinted from *Christian Week* (December 20, 1988) is that Ron Ghitter's speech was given in December 1988, not December 1987. The speech was in fact delivered in 1987.

The problem stems from the fact that the *Christian Week* article was published in 1988 whereas the reprint in *Calvinist Contact* was published in 1989, changing the actual year to which the sentence "It happened last year in Alberta" in the first paragraph was referring.

I am drawing this to your attention for the sake of clarity and accurate reporting.

Tom Bateman
Calgary director
Citizens for Public Justice
Calgary, Alta.

Live up to masthead

I find Ron Ghitter's portrayal of CPJ as an example of an organization which portrays racist, prejudicial and bigoted attitudes ("CPJ urged to 'shed the Christian rhetoric,'" Jan. 13) disturbing. Yet, my mother used to warn me that people tend to judge us by the company we keep. If she was right, then perhaps we can understand Mr. Ghitter's position a bit better if viewed in the light of editorials such as the one which appeared in the same issue of *Calvinist Contact* which takes him to task.

Your editorial entitled "Machine problems in the backyard" tried to deal humorously with the failings of various political systems. What a neat way to dispose of all the "others"! Communism doesn't work, dictators are expensive and bloody but no one has ever seen any perform (This from a journalist in 1989?), and tribalist parts destroy each other. The generalizations are cute, but totally meaningless if one is trying to understand either the advantages and weaknesses of democracy or the shortcomings of the alternatives.

Your reference to Islam, however, was offensive rather than cute. As a world religion surviving under and in spite of all types of political systems, Islam is an alternative to Christianity not to democracy. It has no more in common with communism, tribalism, democracy, hijackings or bombings than Christianity has.

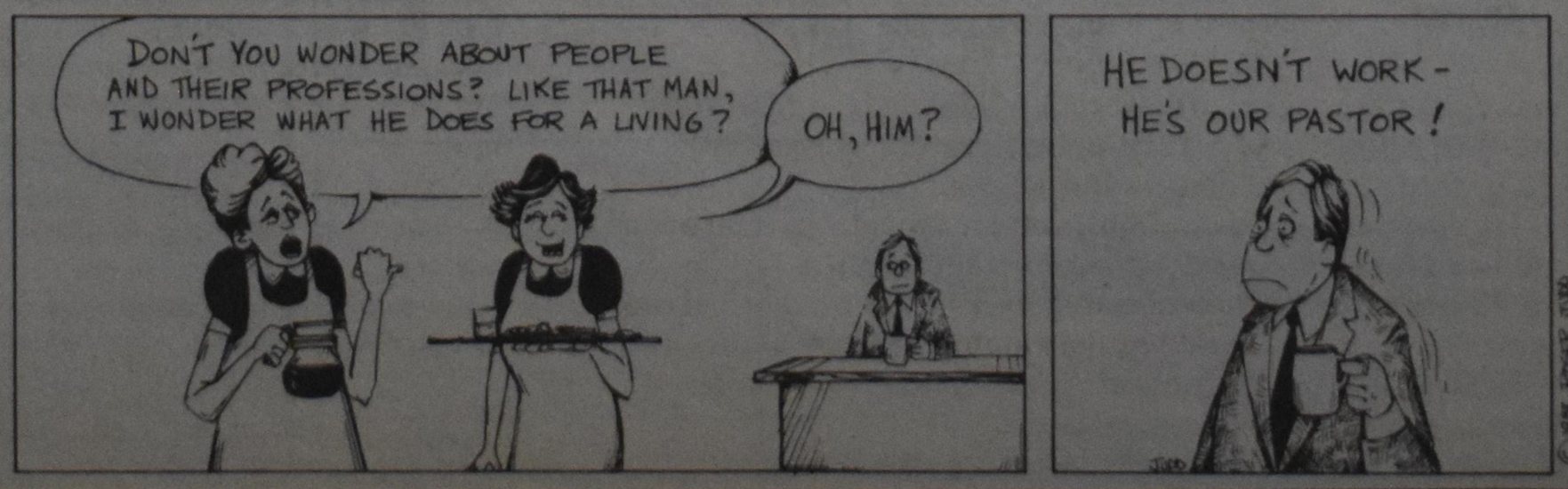
I would remind you of your masthead description of what a Christian weekly ought to do. To stereotype the followers of Islam as terrorists is not to proclaim the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ. It is not humorous. It is only to be careless and irresponsible with the truth, and lends credibility to the likes of Ron Ghitter.

Gary Duthler
Edmonton, Alta.

According to Rev. Bassam Madany of the Arabic language ministry of the Back to God Hour, "Islam is not a state church .... It's much worse — it's a church state." (C.C. March 11, 1988; front page.)

Editor

BEYOND BELIEF


DON'T YOU WONDER ABOUT PEOPLE AND THEIR PROFESSIONS? LIKE THAT MAN, I WONDER WHAT HE DOES FOR A LIVING?
OH, HIM?
HE DOESN'T WORK - HE'S OUR PASTOR!

Special Report

Equity report shows inequity for four groups

Marian Van Til

According to the Employment Equity report released at the end of 1988, four designated groups — women, aboriginals, the disabled and visible minorities — experience discriminatory practices in the work force.

Women comprise 44 per cent of the Canadian work force but hold only 17.4 per cent of upper-level management positions, 33.1 per cent of middle and other managers positions. Women still work overwhelmingly in the "traditional female occupations" involving human services or clerical work. In the employment equity workforce women make up 72.5 per cent of full-time banking jobs but received only 68.3 per cent of the promotions.

Aboriginal peoples

Though a quarter of all aboriginal peoples — Indians, Inuit or Metis — live in Ontario, proportionately, aboriginals make up larger segments of the populations of Manitoba and Saskatchewan (8 per cent each), the Yukon (20 per cent), and the Northwest Territories (60 per cent).

Between 1981 and 1986, the number of aboriginals in the total workforce rose 72 per cent, making up 2.1 of that workforce. But in 1986 the aboriginal unemployment rate was twice that of the total labourforce. The highest percentage of aboriginal workers do manual work of some kind.

Aboriginals (42.2 per cent of whom were women) represent only 0.7 per cent of the employment equity workforce — "less than one-quarter of their portion of the Canadian population and only one-third of their representation in the whole Canadian labour force," the report found.

Aboriginal peoples are hit hard when it comes to salary. Men are paid an average of 10 per cent less than other men in the employment equity workforce; women are paid 7.2 per cent less than the total female average which is already 30 per cent below the male average in the general Canadian workforce.

People with disabilities

The representation of "people, who because of any persistent physical, mental, psychiatric, sensory or learning impairment believe that they are potentially disadvantaged in employment" ranges from less than nine per cent of the population in the Yukon to 16.9 per cent in Nova Scotia.

The report showed that regarding salaries, women with disabilities are hit even harder then aboriginal women, and much harder than men, with or without disabilities. Disabled full-time male employees in the employment equity workforce make marginally less than men working in the general workforce. Disabled women in the employment equity workforce, however, make an average of 31.2 per cent less than disabled men in the same employment categories. They also make 5.4 per cent less than women in full-time employment in the general workforce.

Visible minorities

"Members of visible minorities" are persons other than aboriginal peoples who are "non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." Just over half of Canada's visible minorities live in Ontario.

Between 1981 and 1986, employment of members of visible minorities rose by almost a third. By 1986, 72.1 per cent of all members of visible minorities were working making up six per cent of the employment equity workforce and a marginally higher proportion of the general workforce.

Visible minority men in the employment equity workforce make an average of 96.1 per cent of the men's average in the general workforce. Minority women made virtually the same as women in general. Minority women do well at promotions, receiving 63.1 per cent of promotions among minority employees while making up 49.6 per cent of minority workers.

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***(The above quotes add up to ONLY 107 words from 1988 staff)**

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How employers react to equity law

Marian Van Til

The executive summaries which 139 of the employers included with their completed reports indicate a broad range of reactions to the Employment Equity Act. Only a little over half indicated full support for the concept of employment equity and described the degree of success they had in initiating the program.

Samples: "The right to equal access in employment is a cornerstone of Canadian Human Rights. This philosophy helps us to maintain our competitive edge in the market, while at the same time enabling us to expand and develop the best possible workforce."

"In the beginning, little or no regard was given to formal "Employment Equity" or hiring certain groups. We merely hired anyone with experience. By accident more than design, we were fortunate enough to have several qualified women pilots apply and we eventually employed seven. This action by the company attracted other women pilots who expressed enthusiasm for our hiring practices and their desire to join our company. This unexpected success awoke the company management to the potential value of an "Employment Equity" program. The legislation created the climate to formalize our hiring practices and made the company examine its overall employment practices and performance."

Other employers related difficulty with or indifference to complying with aspects of the act: "Our company requires individuals that are uniquely and highly qualified. It has been our experience that it is extremely difficult to locate people with the required criteria within the target groups." Union agreements were also cited as preventing the "modification of internal practices" which would allow for more hiring of minorities.

Systemic discrimination

The report concludes that "without question, inequities exist." Analyzing the various reasons that is so, it admits, is beyond its scope. However, it "recognizes that there is systemic discrimination. There are also biased attitudes toward members of the designated groups. The Employment Equity Act is a recognition that this must change."

In 1991 and every three years after that, a parliamentary committee will review the effectiveness of the legislation.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Mississippi Burning

Rated AA; stars Gene Hackman, Willem Dafoe; directed by Alan Parker.

Mississippi Burning is causing quite a stir. It will, without doubt, be nominated for a 1988 best picture Oscar. But it doesn't deserve to win.

The film takes us back to a small Mississippi town in 1964, just as civil rights was becoming a movement. It was a time when southern blacks still used drinking fountains marked "coloured," sat in separate sections in restaurants, rode the back of buses, couldn't vote, and got along well with whites as long as they obeyed the rules — the *white* rules. Things were better in the North, but not much.

By that time, Martin Luther King Jr. and a few others had emerged as black leaders, mobilizing blacks to stand up to the racism they faced daily. They were joined by many sympathetic whites.

Three civil rights workers — Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, northern Jewish college kids, and James Chaney, a local black — were murdered in Mississippi in 1964, one for being black, the others for being "nigger lovers." FBI agents were sent to investigate, setting the area on its head and igniting a series of violent, literally fiery incidents. The white southern way of life was being threatened; it was inevitable that things would get much worse before blacks would finally receive equal treatment under the law.

This film takes those murders as its starting point, weaving into it a fictional story about two white FBI agents, one a compassionate but by-the-book northerner, and one an enlightened good 'ole boy from Mississippi.

The great irony of this film is that, while its obvious purpose is to deplore racism in America and to vividly portray its crushing effects, in our conservative times it is afraid to tell this important story from the point of view of its main characters — blacks. There isn't one black in the film who isn't relegated to a back-seat role. If this movie had been made 10 or 15 years ago, that almost certainly wouldn't have been the case.

British director Alan Parker admits that he didn't think the movie would sell with blacks in major roles. So he decided to tell their story without them. It seems that Hollywood still believes that North America will only accept and admire blacks as singers, comedians and athletes. Is that true? Or is Hollywood simply taking the easy, monied route that it almost always takes?

Black story needs telling

That's not to say that the civil rights movement story cannot be told from the point of view of the whites who worked alongside the blacks and who helped get that lumbering giant, the machinery of government, moving towards justice for all. But the black story has not yet been told. There are thousands of American children of all races who have grown up since civil rights days knowing nothing of that struggle. They should be acquainted with the historic record (it's dramatic enough!) before we start fictionalizing it for late-1980s mass consumption.

There's little subtlety here. The characters in *Mississippi Burning* are just too black and white, if you'll pardon the pun. All the blacks are meek, passive types; all the white men are secret Ku Klux Klans members and their wives are airheads along for the ride. Only one (white) woman is a slightly complex personality, as is the southern FBI man, played exquisitely by Gene Hackman.

This film has its good points, however. It makes an admirable attempt to picture the devastation that racism can cause — both to the recipient and in the hater. That's something we all need to see periodically. But it doesn't go beyond effects to *causes*. It can't get at the heart of racism because it doesn't understand the fallen human heart. It seems locked into a view of humanity which sees most of us as good and some of us as evil. Period. (And it has no idea how to handle complex societal *systems* which show evidence of the Fall.) If we're good, it's okay to use the same tactics as those who are evil, as long as it's for a good cause. (So eventually, the FBI goes after the Klan using Klan tactics, and succeeds admirably — causing the audience to cheer in appreciation.)

It may be beneficial that this film is generating large audiences and so much talk. But only insofar as those audiences are led to delve into the *real* story of not just one series of incidents in one summer in one place, but of a decade or more when a whole nation burned.

Democracy: humbug

Adrian Peetoom

The last two federal elections in North America made a farce of democracy. Most of my U.S. friends — if they voted at all — were no more happy with the tone and choices of their day in the voting booth than my Canadian friends were with theirs. Both groups complained about the trivialization of a broad range of important issues. Both groups would not like any of the major candidates as their personal friends.

"Farce" is defined by my trusted dictionary as "a hollow pretense, a mockery." The majority of Canadians voted for a party opposed to free trade, but the winning party leader claimed to have received a mandate to implement it. And remember George Bush in the U.S. saying about tax increases: "Read my lips?" I suggest that American citizens already know that while there was "no-no" on George's lips, there was "yes-yes" in his heart.

Neither major candidate in either country articulated a consistent vision about his role in building a society more just, more caring and more sharing, something one could be proud of and eager to vote for. What got me most of all were the reported results of "exit polls," opinion polls of people who had just voted. In many cases those polls contradicted the results of the voting just held inside! What a farce.

Selling snake oil

Commentators generally agree that television is shaping politics to be ever more lacking in content. Bush's TV ads did Dukakis in, even though they were grossly unfair or out-and-out lies. Mulroney's shrill TV ads turned the tide of Turner's growing popularity in the last few weeks of the election in Canada. And for those of us who keep in touch with their European roots, major candidates for high office there are equally suited to quick TV images and adept at using that medium for their personal aim of gaining and staying in power. The Dutch prime minister looks terrific on TV, upbeat when filmed in public, suitably bored when captured listening to a member in parliament. Reminded me of Trudeau at his impish best!

I'm not saying that after the election there is no serious governing left. A country's real problems do not go away. It's just that elections of the type we just had do not matter much anymore, for promises and stances disappear totally with the victory speeches.

I want to go back in history and begin a campaign for restricting the vote to only those citizens (of all ages!) who can demonstrate a minimum knowledge of current events, contemporary issues, party platforms and party leader qualifications. (I'm open to considering additional criteria.)

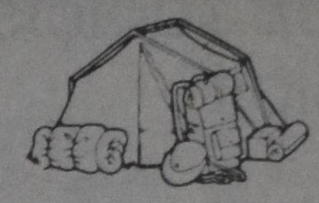
I won't let clumsy novices fix my plumbing, lay my electrical wires, repair my car, or treat my illnesses. I think also that electing politicians is too important to be entrusted to citizens whose only qualifications are age and residence outside some jail.

I'm not advocating this point of view for eternity. For a time, votes *were* restricted, sometimes along literacy lines, but the *motives* for such restrictions had to do with keeping power to a privileged elite. Today's power is also restricted to an elite, namely those who, with money and privilege, command TV time to whip up the masses to do their bidding at election time. It's general ignorance that insures the ascendency of such politicians.

I believe that by withholding ignorance from voters, elections will quickly change for the better in tone and content. And in type and quality of candidates; about that, a bit more next time.

Adrian Peetoom is senior editor of Scholastic-TAB Publications, Ltd., *in Richmond Hill, Ont.*

For the time being...



Adrian Peetoom

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Sex addicts may be found in churches, sometimes behind the pulpit

GOLDEN VALLEY, Minn. (EP) — Christians still wince when hearing of ministers caught in sexual sin, and ask, why can't these guys control themselves? According to an ordained minister who is also a psychologist, many pastors leading out-of-control lives of secret lust may be asking themselves the same question. Hidden behind their immoral behaviour may be a psychological problem of sexual addiction as real to its sufferers as addiction to drugs or alcohol.

Though the term "sexual addiction" is a recent invention, there's nothing new about the problem, according to the Rev. Dr. Mark R. Laaser of the Sexual Dependency Unit of Golden Valley Health Center in Minnesota, the nation's first "12-step"-based, in-patient unit for sexual addicts. "It's like alcoholism," he explains. "People have been alcoholics for centuries, but it wasn't until 1935 that we gave a name to it. Sexual addiction has existed for centuries too, and we're just beginning to recognize what it's all about."

Signs of sexual addiction can be seen in the lives of some Bible characters, such as Samson. "Why did he go to that prostitute again and again, when he must have known of the danger?" asks Laaser.

Laaser, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, conducts seminars on sexual addiction in the church and is quick to explain that not everyone engaging in sexual immorality is suffering from sexual addiction, which he defines as "anything that is repetitive sexual behaviour that is done despite the person's intention to stop and their knowledge that it can lead to very destructive consequences. That repetitive behaviour despite the possible consequences is sexual addiction."

Where does sexual addiction come from? Research done so far indicates that over 80 per cent of sexual addicts received sexual abuse as children from adults they expected to nurture them. These victims of sexual abuse come to equate physical intimacy with nurturing, and later seek out sexual contacts in an effort to meet their emotional needs.

Repressive religions related to addiction

Being part of a church with strict moral codes regarding sexual behaviour may not help a person avoid sexual addiction. "Unfortunately, the statistics we're starting to see suggest that people who come from repressive religious backgrounds are much more likely to have problems with all addictions in general," says Laaser. "I'm talking about religion that is only negative, that only talks about the punitive nature of God — that he is judgmental and angry and that there are things we shouldn't do and if we do them God will be angry and punish us. That leads people to 'act out' in an effort to escape that feeling of shame, and that leads to sexual addiction."

And while media scrutiny makes the incidence of sexual misbehaviour among the clergy seem more widespread than it is, clergy do seem to be at special risk, according to Laaser.

"There are a lot of people that go into ministry trying to solve some of their own problems, really feeling that by being ordained they will all of a sudden stop having the problem," he says. "When it comes to sexual addiction, I think there are many men who have gone into ministry believing that their ordination and role in the world will keep them from acting out."

The actual life of a minister, however, offers no freedom from temptation. "A lot of things in the role place them in danger," he notes. "They're placed on pedestals and expected to be perfect, and that increases their stress level and loneliness. There is an anger and loneliness that's created, along with a feeling of being special. The delusion is that 'God will protect me from any consequences of acting out.'

"Add to that the fact that there are a lot of people who are willing to do just about anything to please a minister. If you've got a minister who's sexually addicted and in a power position with a vulnerable person like a woman who idealizes her pastor and is willing to do anything for him, that's a vulnerable, volatile situation. There is a susceptible population of people. That's not to say the minister is preying on people — there are just a lot of opportunities."

As more is learned about sexual addiction, churches are better able to deal with pastors with this problem. Laaser recalls, "Traditionally, the church has just tried to cover it up, and keep the problem of clergy acting out within the confines of a church a real secret. Ministers who have acted out have traditionally been moved, as church leaders try the 'geographic cure' and the assumption is made that they'll mend their ways when they get to a new location and be fine. We've learned painfully that this doesn't work."

Church must be open

Laaser thinks the church should learn to be more open in dealing with the problem of sexual addiction. "It's such a secretive disease and shameful disease, and if you've got this problem, who would you talk to? I masturbate every day or go to massage parlours, would I talk to my pastor about it? Doubtful. This has been a problem in the church for centuries, and we need to teach about Jesus' accepting nature and remind people that some of Jesus' best friends had been guilty of this behaviour."

While some Christians in general, and ministers in particular, may be more vulnerable to sexual addiction than most, Laaser believes Christians also hold the key to beating this problem. "As a Christian I believe the only strength to combat this disease comes through God. I believe God can work through other people in the community as well. I've known a lot of Christians who have tried to get over this disease by praying, by reading the Bible — I even knew one guy who claimed to have been baptized three times, and each time he felt that the baptism would get rid of the problem. It didn't.

Manipulating God

"The conclusion I'm left with is that there are people who are trying to manipulate God," he continues. "They think that if they read the Bible enough or pray enough or go to church services enough then God will answer whatever prayer they have and do whatever they want him to do. That's not the total surrender we Christians believe in. We need to say 'God, I can't control my life, you take control.' That's the kind of surrender that allows God to help a person."

The Golden Valley Health Center's Sexual Dependency Unit follows a 12-step program similar to Alcoholics Anonymous, emphasizing reliance on a higher power. "The whole field of addiction [treatment] is a very spiritual thing," says Laaser. "The 12 steps are very spiritually oriented, with surrender, confession, spiritual journey."

How can people know if they need help with a sexual addiction? Laaser says, "If you find yourself asking the question of whether you are sexually addicted, you owe yourself the favour of calling a professional and getting advice. The question is this: are you involved in sexual behaviour — whether it's fantasy, or masturbation, or pornography, or whatever — that you would rather not do, or that has negative consequences, or that you do only to escape feelings?"

Laaser concludes, "People should know that there is help to be had here. It's an extremely shameful and lonely disease. Get some help anonymously, but stop being lonely, stop being ashamed. Christ promises us that we'll be forgiven."

CR World Missions supports more teachers in China

Photo: CRWM

Christian Reformed World Missions recently sent five more English teachers to China to bring the total to 10: (l-r) Alice Laarman, Darrel Ibeling, Joyce Dekker, David Watson, and EveLynn Spykman. Teachers not pictured are: James Arkema, Karla Holwerda, Robert and Mary Prince, and Trevor Rubingh. Gwen VanderTuin is a recruiter for ELIC based in California.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (CRWM) — China's leaders have until recently been a larger obstacle to foreign visitors than the Great Wall for which the country is known. But with the rapid modernization of other Third World countries in Asia and around the globe, the new Chinese government is anxious for its own development. It sees the English language as a key to development through technology and trade, and it now welcomes North Americans into China to teach English to its people.

Christian Reformed World Missions, through the English Language Institute/China (ELIC) and the Educational Services Exchange/China (ESEC) programs, plans to send up to 15 Christian English teachers to China in 1989. At present, World Missions co-sponsors 10 teachers in China. The Chinese government has contracted with ELIC, a Christian agency headquartered in San Dimas, California, to supply 1,000 English teachers to China in the next three years. ELIC has been sending teachers to China since 1982.

ELIC provides English training to Chinese undergraduate students, educators, scientists, medical personnel, and other professionals. More than 700 Chinese universities offer English classes, and English is taught in nearly 100,000 high schools throughout the country. Teaching English has opened doors that had long been closed to outside influence.

"Our teachers do not go to impose their values on unsuspecting students," says Ken Wendling, ELIC president. "They enter through the front door as guests of a government that knows they come to serve the Chinese people in Christ's name. Each teacher finds unbelievable opportunities to share his or her life and language in what the media calls 'a changing China.'"

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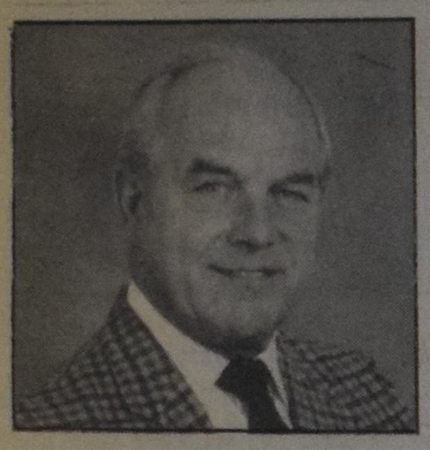

Canadian Church Scene

Elections and the Lord's Prayer

Jacob Kuntz

In Canadian church magazines we found several interesting comments regarding last fall's elections. Understandably, they do not discuss the issues at stake (such as free trade), but point at some related issues that are also of great importance and should not be forgotten.

In the December 6 issue of *Christian Week* Dr. John Redekop takes a look at what happened. We quote:

Exactly how consequential this election will be, no one can tell. It may mark the beginning of a new surge in Canadian economic and social progress, in virtual lockstep with the U.S., or it may initiate a gradual cultural and political decline. Conceivably it could do both. Whatever the consequences, this vast land will surely experience gradual but far-reaching changes.

Is there a single Christian response to the recent election result? Probably not. The main issues involved seem not to hinge on particularly religious values. Nationalism and the maintenance of political autonomy are not listed among the Christian virtues.

Moreover, while some of us, thinking of "Christian-Americanism," etc., feel that Canadian Christians would be farther ahead in an autonomous Canada, others of us, envious of greater American freedom to set up religious radio stations and dreaming of lower taxes, see matters differently.

How, then, should Christian Canadians respond to the 1988 national election outcome? We should thank God for our free land and for our free electoral system. The Estonians and Lithuanians are currently clamouring for what we have!

We should continue to pray for those who rule over us. We should not cultivate animosities aroused by the heated campaign rhetoric.

We should make what small or large contribution we can to facilitate the fair and smooth implementation of the free trade agreement. We must try to make it work.

We should also increasingly cultivate the practice of expressing constructive criticism. Christians need to become much more active and adept in writing letters to the editor and to their political leaders.

That, too, is an expression of responsible Christian citizenship.

Peter Trueman (*Catholic Register*, December 10) points to the consequences of our electoral system:

The opposition parties rightly point out that at least 52 per cent of the Canadians who went to the polls voted against the Tories and, presumably, their free trade deal, and that only 43 per cent supported them.

But that is the way our system works, and I don't recall the Liberals railing about parliamentary democracy on those occasions when they were the government and the system enabled them to impose their will on an unwilling Canadian majority.

If you're going to play the game, you can't complain about the rules when you find yourself losing.

But that is not to say there are no inequities in the parliamentary system, and that Canadians, as they slip into the 21st century, should blindly perpetuate a form of government invented by 13th century Englishmen.

If we pride ourselves on democratic principles, surely there is some reason for questioning a system in which the Conservatives, with only 43 per cent of the vote, get 58 per cent of the seats in the House.

If seats had been distributed according to the popular vote, we would have had a Tory minority government.

Instead of having 170 seats, the Tories would have emerged with 126; the Liberals, instead of 82, would have had 94; and the NDP, instead of 43, would have had 59. I am not at all sure that that result would have produced better government, but it would have been more representative.

The *War Cry* of December 31 comes with some New Year's Eve considerations on "Losing the Race?" and says with respect to the election:

The noise and the bitter invective of the federal election has disappeared and though all seems quiet on the surface, there are deep wounds, and healing is needed. Those charged with the responsibility of bringing about such renewal must realize that they can do nothing without the Healer, Jesus Christ. Only He can bring true peace and harmony.

Parliament has been recalled to consider legislation which, as the pundits would have us believe, is certain to change the direction of Canada for succeeding generations. Do they really believe their own statements, or are they simply writing to support an entrenched position? One thing is certain: no trade deal — no matter what it is like — has the power to change a nation unless that nation has already lost its anchor. Any country that has its collective eyes fixed on money and all the splendour and wealth that it promises to bring will never see the little people, the hurting ones, the ones whom God cares about so passionately.

We refuse to believe that this country's heart beats only to the sound of the cash register. We will not accept that the greatest danger facing Canada is the threatened loss of sovereignty. The most acute danger facing this country is the loss of its soul, the almost irresistible temptation to put things before people and to amass personal wealth at the expense of compassion.

Mennonites were thankful for the presence of about 20 Mennonite candidates for the House of Commons. (How many candidates were there with a truly Reformed perspective?) Marlene Epp writes in the *Mennonite Reporter* of December 5:

Election '88 has come and gone. Whether we held victory parties or wakes on the evening of November 21, I'm sure everyone is relieved that the campaign is over.

Though 40 years ago it would have been a rarity, with each election more Mennonites enter the political arena and try for a seat in the House of Commons. In this election, I counted about 20 Mennonite names on the list of candidates across the country.

Most Mennonites who enter politics seem to favour either the Progressive Conservatives or the Liberals and those who make it are usually on the PC side of the House. Occasionally a Mennonite candidate wears a New Democratic Party hat and in this election Ray Funk won a seat for the NDP in Saskatchewan. As more "fringe" parties appear, one sees Mennonites carrying the banners of the Christian Heritage or Reform parties.

The Lord's Prayer in public schools

The editor of *The Messenger* (of the Free Reformed Churches) is not happy with the ruling of the Ontario Court of Appeal that it is unconstitutional to require students in public schools to recite the Lord's Prayer. Whereas other Christians feel that praying the Lord's Prayer in the public school makes no sense and often even makes a mockery of that prayer, *The Messenger* is of the opinion that this "last remaining symbol of Christian culture in Ontario's public school system" should be returned.

One might argue that the mere reciting of the Lord's Prayer and reading a few Bible verses does not make a school Christian, and that therefore the banning of these exercises does not alter its character in any significant way. But surely that is not the issue. What is important here is the symbolism involved. Our educators, by this decision, have clearly put the province on notice that ours is not a Christian culture any longer. From now on those who desire spiritual guidance for their children will have to be content with a much more ecumenical approach to religion. The new regulation does not wish to drop religious or spiritual observances altogether, says Mr. Ward, but the school system's role is "to try to inculcate values in the broadest possible way."

Just what is meant by this "broadest possible way" becomes quite clear when one examines the *Book of Prayers and Readings* used in the Toronto public school system. This book contains the Lord's Prayer and some Bible passages, but there are also various Hindu and Buddhist prayers, readings from the Koran and Bahai sacred books and a host of other readings reflecting the gamut of religious beliefs.

All the more reason to have our own schools, you will say. True, but is that all that needs to be said? We cannot be thankful enough to have access to schools where Christ is honoured and his Word revered, but what about the bulk of our nation's children who go to public schools where their only exposure to religion is based on this potpourri of world religions? Do we not have a responsibility towards them too? Indeed we do. Also, as citizens and taxpayers, we have both the right and the duty to protest this action of the Court of Appeal. Thousands of concerned Christians have already signed a petition demanding that the Lord's Prayer and Bible readings be returned to morning exercises in the public schools. Our signatures belong on that petition too. It is the least thing we can do to remind our government that we love and respect this nation's Christian heritage.

Jacob Kuntz is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, Kitchener, Ont.

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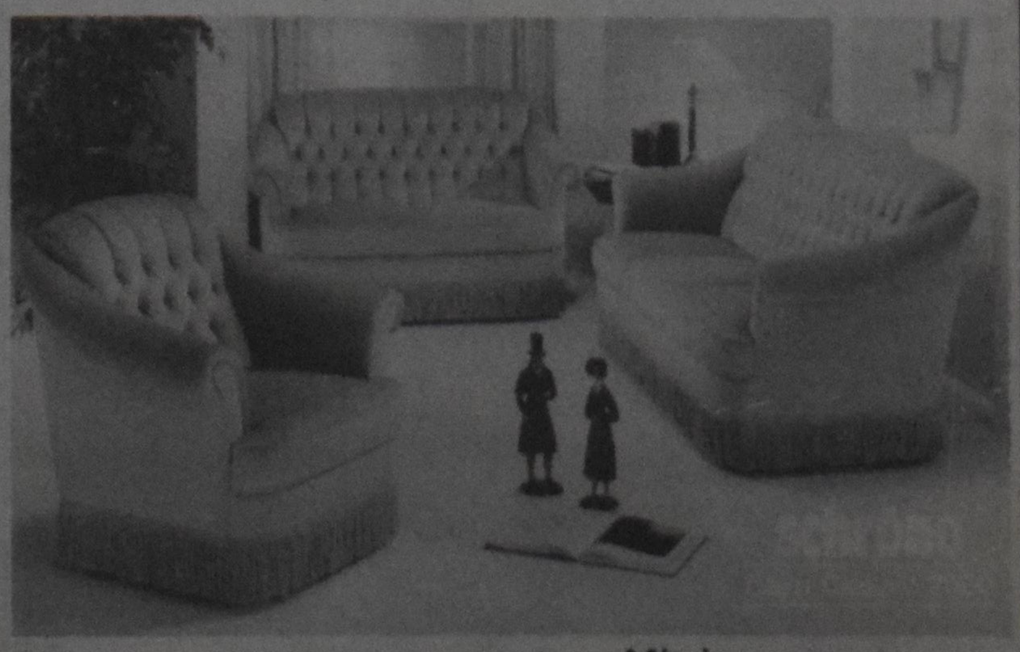

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Feature

John Terpstra: as poet and carpenter, enjoying God forever

Photo: by Nisio

John Terpstra (l), the winner of the F.G. Bressani Prize for poetry, receives the award from Celso Boscariol, President of the society.

Patricia Westerhof-Nyman

John Terpstra is the author of two books of poetry, *Scrabbling for Repose* (Split Reed Press, 1981) and *Forty Days and Forty Nights* (Netherlandic Press, 1987). Last September he won the Bressani Award for *Forty Days and Forty Nights* in a country-wide competition.

John grew up in Hamilton, Ontario, and graduated from Calvin Christian School and Hamilton District Christian High School. He attended Trinity Christian College for two years and earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto in 1979. At present John lives in Hamilton with his wife and two young daughters and is a cabinet maker and woodworker. He and his family worship at St. Cuthbert's Presbyterian Church.

In this interview, John talks about his reasons for writing poetry, some of the influences on his work, and the kinds of poetry he is working on now.

C.C.: *How did you begin writing poetry?*

John: I won an award for poetry in Grade 5 — I came in second with a limerick. Then, in Grade 10 at HDCH (Hamilton District Christian High School), we were assigned to write a poem. The night before we had to hand it in, I sat down in front of the typewriter and did the same thing that I heard my dad do almost every night of my life — pound away on the typewriter — and I liked it. My poem won a prize in the fine arts festival. The next year I won every prize in the fine arts festival. That was the high point of my career!

I figured out later that I liked writing because it was a gratuitous activity; there was very obviously no financial or economic reason to do it. It could never be a job. On the other hand, it was evident to me that writing was a good and necessary thing to do. So, to oppose my pragmatic background, I latched on to writing.

Of course I didn't know any of that at the time. I didn't write much during college — at least not much that was any good. By "good" I simply mean anything that does not become an embarrassment for me to read to others. I didn't write anything good until at least a year after I got married. Then I wrote what I think of as my first real poem, which was called, "Voice From the Back Seat." It was written for the opening of a show at the Patmos Art Gallery.

C.C.: From that time on, did you write fairly regularly?

John: No, I didn't. I never have. My poems for *Scrabbling For Repose* were finished because I had to meet a deadline, and the same thing happened with *Forty Days and Forty Nights*. I respond well to an assignment — a hangover from school days.

C.C.: *One rarely hears of someone supporting a family by writing poetry. Do you hope to do so someday?*

John: There are maybe two poets in Canada who support themselves on the proceeds of their poetry books and their readings. If you want to live off your poetry in Canada, you have to become a writer-in-residence at a university or a teacher of creative writing at a university or get into one of the new provincial writer-in-residence programs which only give you a year. Poets don't live off writing poetry; they live off things on the side. I could see myself in a university setting, but when I meet other writers, they're all teaching somewhere, and when they find out that I'm a cabinet-maker, they say it must be great to do something other than writing or thinking about writing all day. Which leads me to think that maybe I'm better off doing what I'm doing. I like going to the shop, I like working with the machines, and I like making things.

C.C.: *Where do your ideas and inspiration come from?*

John: For a while the only things I wrote were derived from nature. My impetus still comes from nature and from my interest in how human beings respond to their physical surroundings. More recently, even though I've never considered myself a religious or overtly Christian writer, I've been struck by certain things in the theology I grew up with in the Dutch Calvinist tradition, and I want to write about that way of seeing scripture or that way of seeing the world.

C.C.: *In what ways has your Dutch Calvinist background affected your writing?*

John: Being born and raised in the Christian Reformed Church and going to Christian schools all your life can put you in a funny position, because there can be this tension between you and the outside world. And I've generally been more attracted to the world because it usually seemed to be more interesting than either church or school. I was always interested in what was going on — in the arts, the news, politics and so on, and school was too insular to provide me with the information I wanted. For a while I decided I would choose the world rather than church and religion, because the world seemed like a much more lively place to be. And then I went to Trinity Christian College, and took Philosophy 101 with Calvin Seerveld, where finally there was some imaginative meat put on my upbringing.

Another major force in my background was pragmatism. I grew to hate the word *realistic*, and I hated the line, "What are you going to do?" That's what I heard going through high school, which, I guess, coming from my folks was a perfectly reasonable question to ask; but I hated it. I didn't like to be put on the spot and I began thinking, "Isn't it enough that I *am*? Do I have to *do* something? Can't I just *be*?" That's why I enjoyed writing so much, because writing seemed obviously necessary to do. To bring something into the world was a redemptive activity, and it was gratuitous — free! I still like that about writing; it's not a necessity like a house and food and going out to work. I like that it has nothing to do with money and is not less important because of the absence of dollar signs.

C.C.: *What are some of the current influences on your writing?*

John: One influence is being involved at present in a church where I can use my poetry liturgically. I want to write more liturgical pieces and read them in front of a congregation with musical accompaniment.

Some writers are influences. The first poet I was really stunned by was Richard Wilbur. I also like Christopher Fry, a playwright, and John McPhee, a journalist with the *New Yorker* and Michael Ondaatje, a Canadian poet. But I think the biggest influence is music, almost any kind of music. I'd like my poetry to be as appealing and immediate as music.

C.C.: *Do you write for a particular audience?*

John: For my liturgical pieces, I write for a congregation, because, unlike for other audiences, I can make certain assumptions about a congregation and it's helpful not having to explicate biblical allusions.

There can be a lot of ego involved with writing. People recognize your work and associate you with it. But often I feel as if, though I have written the poems, it wasn't really me, and people's praise is misplaced. That's why I like reading my poetry as part of a worship service — then the focus isn't on me and the poems are in the right context.

I write my non-liturgical poetry also for an audience. A friend of mine after doing some poetry readings decided that he was going to write without any audience in mind. But I don't want to do that. I want to be part of that play between someone doing something and an audience responding or not responding.

"My impetus still comes from nature and from my interest in how human being

C.C.: *I understand you've been doing some live performances recently. Will you describe them?*

John: That's my major project right now. It started a number of years ago. I was asked if I could do a reading with music behind it at a friend's performance — he had a band at the Gown and Gavel [A Hamilton pub]. Well, I read, while Glen played, and his brother Colin painted. Later, Colin said he wanted to try painting just to a reading. At the time I was working on a number of poems about trees. The idea grew. A friend who was a composer got involved and then a dancer joined us, too. We got together around a manuscript of mine called, *Naked Trees*, and had two performances at the Hamilton Art Gallery this spring.

C.C.: *Is there such a thing as Christian poetry?*

John: I think that doing poetry is no more a Christian activity than swinging a hammer is. By itself, a poem is no more a Christian object than the hammer or the house that was built. But, my being a Christian will make a difference to what I am writing and how I am writing it. I like a more angled approach to Christianity, something that comes from out of the bushes or from under the porch, not driving down the four lanes of correct doctrine. Often a poem that looks like a Christian poem really isn't a poem at all — it's not well enough done to be considered a poem.

C.C.: *What makes a poem a poem, then?*

John: The only thing that I can relate it to is making things, like furniture. I can remember when I started making furniture, I would make things according to plan or according to the piece that was in the showroom that we had in front of the shop. I made the parts and put them together and then sent them off to be finished. And then at some point, I made my own piece of furniture from scratch. I knew it was a piece of furniture and I had the wherewithal to do it. I needed technical skills on the one hand but the skills by themselves wouldn't do anything if there weren't some driving force, some spirit behind them. I first thought I wrote a poem when I had a better idea of what spirit I was writing it in. When you're writing, you're writing out of a spirit, or maybe you're writing the spirit out.

C.C.: *What makes a bad poem bad?*

John: I don't know — it's hard to tell. And the trouble is a lot of people like bad poets better than they like good poets. I think bad poems have their place; they're necessary. People do have a need to write — you are called upon to do it, and then you just do it as well as you can, with what you have. There's a lot of room in the world for both bad and good poems and everything in between.

C.C.: *What role do you think a poet should play in a community?*

John: Historically, poetry has always been held in very high esteem — people say that poets are the preservers of language, that they carry the stories forward to the next generation, that they have a prophetic voice, and that their poems embody the culture. I've always heard and read that kind of thing, but it never rang true with what I saw and heard of the poetry around me. I might be able to think that that were the role of poetry if poetry had a little more currency today. But right now poetry has become for the most part another one of the group things: the specialized group. Most of the people who show up at poetry readings are other poets, and most of the people that buy the books are other poets. Literary journals go out to libraries or they go to other poets. The world of poetry is by and large self-contained. A few poets cross the line — like Irving Layton and maybe Margaret Atwood and Al Purdy.

I would like my poetry to have a role. In the *Westminster Confession*, it says the purpose of humankind is to love God and enjoy him forever. I would like to be given the grace to enjoy God enough so that the way I write would give that same enjoyment to others.

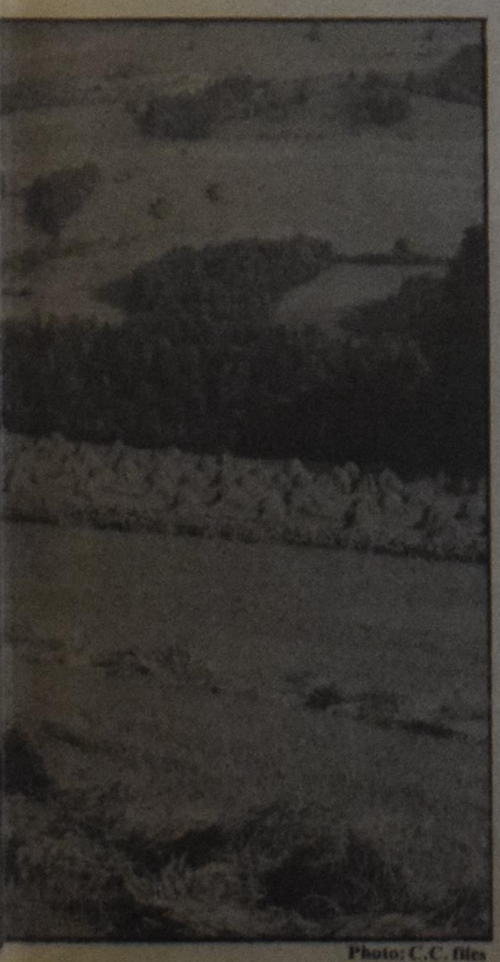

Photo: C.C. files

s respond to their physical surroundings.

Patricia Westerhof-Nyman teaches English at Beacon Christian High School, St. Catharines, Ont.

No Dwelling Place

Your father and I tried to see
each new place as a kind of Bethlehem,
and we were the young, royal couple,
living our own adventure of faith
the same as you, same as any blessed one
who can hear the angels sing in the sky
or the still small voice of God's kept promises.
And it helped. Heaven knows
the so-called houses we landed in
were often no more than sheds,
and in that first year-and-a-half
there were four; which meant I'd bring
just a bit gezelligheid into our home
when off we would go to the next.
Don't mistake it now; we wanted
to settle down, but the better work
was always elsewhere, so after I'd altered
the curtains for the umpteenth time
and hung another hectare of paper,
I simply gave in, gave in to the thought
we were not here to stay, didn't know
where it would end, if so, or what
might happen next. And funny to tell,
this helped too. It put me in a mind
where the unexpectedness of each day
was actually welcome, and that picture
perfect world I wanted us to make
so it could be like back home, faded.

Your father and I tried to see this,
each town, each place, each time we left,
and driving to the new unknown
we'd do a game:
for unto you,
Aldershot, Ontario
least among the towns
of Highway 2 — to you this day, from
the House of Orange, shall come
an immigrant family of four.
Is there
enough hay?
How you swaddle the past,
especially when you make the move
up.
That was a nice place we had
on the King Road, in Aldershot.
It was small, but snug, and well-kept.
Your sisters and I could work the orchard
with dad, and it was pleasant work,
the picking, and pleasant to be outside
for our first indian summer. We were high
and could see the lake, and you grow attached,
you do, surprising sometimes how soon.
So I **did** *cry, there, when the truck was packed,*
before we even had a Christmas.
And it was so cold, even with us four
in the cab, and the further we drove
the longer it took till the next town,
and we only knew to stay on Highway 2
they told us, but not how far, or when
we'd see a sign, for
Gananoque
Lansdowne
Escott
and no one ever tells
what turns our lives will take, or where
or when it leadeth us, through
Cana
Capernaum
Gethsemane
and Jesus
said it best, he knew
the birds of the air
that they always have nests, and even
the foxes
but where, I wondered
as the lights of St. Lawrence ships
went by
can a poor dutch girl
lay down her head.
Mallorytown.
Brockville.

There are days
where I feel this
even still
There are days
don't you?

John Terpstra

A renewed sense of masculinity

Dean McRae

A man's sense of his own masculinity is something he easily assumes. But is our definition of masculinity something we should so uncritically accept? We must realize that certain views can be detrimental to men's relationships in their roles as husbands, fathers, or single adults.

Even at a young age, boys are often starting behaviours that will make future relationships difficult for them. When boys first start school, they are often more mischievous and a bit "wilder" than girls. Boys are more likely to be loud, get into fights, disrupt classes and defy authority.

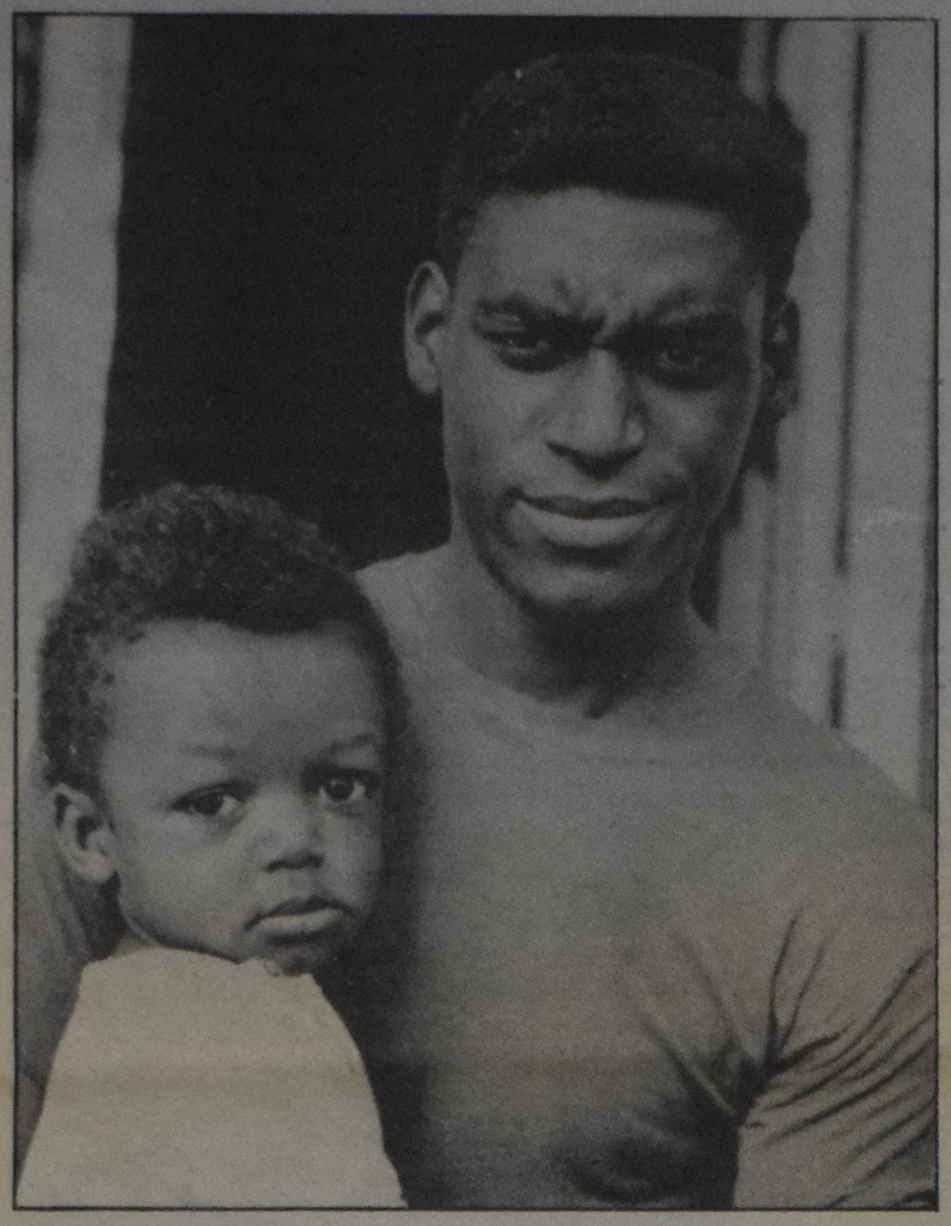

Photo: Call them Canadians

"He has to learn to be more gentle, kind, care-giving."

Already at a young age friendships among boys exist in striking contrast to those of girls. Girls want close friends with whom they can spend a lot of time. They want someone with whom they can talk about anything and everything — from everyday concerns, to their greatest fears, to their wildest dreams.

Boys, on the other hand, learn that their friendships are much more activity — and accomplishment — orientated. Friendship for boys is seen primarily as something one *does*. It is primarily about sports or activities such as hiking, biking, or horsing around rather than about heart-to-heart talks or intimacy.

While girls feel valued by doing well in school or by being helpful to their peers, parents and teachers, for boys this is often not enough. They need something to sharply distinguish themselves from girls. There is a void in their lives which must be filled. Unfortunately, this void is not always filled in a constructive way. In a boy's teenage years a certain amount of rough-housing and "carrying on" is condoned and often almost expected. After all, as we say, "boys will be boys." Boys develop a free and easy, carefree, and sometimes irresponsible attitude.

This attitude may be nothing but a charming boyishness, but on a darker side, it can easily cause problems when it comes time, for example, for responsible and considerate dating. In dating, when boys have to deal with sexual and emotional feelings, their unease and inexperience with intimate relationships begin to show, especially when the romance and charm wears off.

What happens when these boys reach adulthood? What kind of husbands will they make? For a while, a couple is in love, devoted to one another and each willing to serve the other. However, when the romance fades away, two fantastically different individuals stand face-to-face. A man and woman have two very different ideas about marital expectations.

A woman often wants a more full and intense relationship than a man. A man does not really deep-down believe that his relationship with his wife is as important to him as his career ambitions and dreams. Therefore his motivation and identity will be found primarily outside of their marriage. In some instances one might say, "a wife's best friend is her husband, but a man's best friend are his accomplishments."

Consequently, a husband sees a major part of his wife's role as supporting *his* dreams and ambitions. A wife is to be a loyal confidant and advisor. He wants respect but not the kind of love a woman wants. He doesn't need a lot of interaction with his wife; he needs only to know that she is there. He wants only to be reminded occasionally that he is appreciated and respected. So after an initial period of romance, a man settles into a day-to-day practicality in which the marriage is low key and, to a large extent, taken for granted.

Continual nurturing

A woman's expectations of the marriage are opposite. She sees no reason why romance, "tender loving care," and intimacy should not always remain a part of marriage. She may, for example, expect hand-holding, embracing, touching and kissing to always be an important aspect of marriage. In conversation with her husband, she expects an easy-going openness to talk about anything from day-to-day occurrences, to successes, to personal insecurities. She may not understand her husband's overly passive, laid-back view of marriage. Instead, she feels marriage requires active involvement, something that needs to be constantly nurtured.

A wife feels their relationship must always be growing or it will begin to die. Unfortunately, she often discovers that things such as the amount of time spent together are not as important for her husband as they are for her. Her need to touch base and express herself to her husband is not a need her husband feels he has.

If marriage is the union of two such opposite personalities — the laid-back male attitude and the close, intimate female attitude — it is no wonder that major marital problems can develop. When this happens, a man can find it tremendously frustrating because he sees himself as doing the best job he can to be a good husband. From his perspective, his wife seems so demanding and unappreciative in feeling she is not loved in the way she wants to be loved. Because her husband is basically a self-sufficient, non-relationship-oriented male, his attempts to love her the way she wants are often sporadic and short-lived. A husband may feel he has already made a lot of changes for his wife but now she is asking too much. He feels he has to set a limit. He can't change his personality. He can't be something he is not just to make her happy.

Look again at "feminine" qualities

He can't be something he is not, just to make her happy. That is where the problem lies. To resolve their alienation from each other and the lack of communication with his wife, a husband often has to radically alter his personality. He has to start giving priority in his life to the "feminine" qualities he has previously neglected.

He has to learn to be more gentle, kind, care-giving, and more attentive to detail in relationships. To a certain extent, to be able to relate well to a woman, he has to be able to become like a woman. Single men and husbands must realize that ultimately there is nothing unmanly about a lot of supposedly "feminine characteristics."

The fruits of the spirit, for example, are listed in Galatians 5: "peace, patience, gentleness, kindness and faithfulness" — virtues which are often associated with the care-giving, maternal female. Other scripture passages talk about the giving up of ourselves in our relationships with others (Philippians 2; 1 Corinthians 9).

Too often, society's view of masculinity has shaped our faith in God and our relationships to each other. Not that all stereotyped male qualities are bad. Many, such as independence, self-reliance, and ambition can build a hardworking, responsible attitude (in men and women). However, the problem arises when these good qualities are developed to the exclusion of other qualities. So, then, for the sake of Christian selfhood, fatherhood, and more fuller marriages, we men should make sure we restore relationships to being the central focus of our male identity.

Dean McRae is an elder at Zion Christian Reformed Church, Oshawa, Ont.

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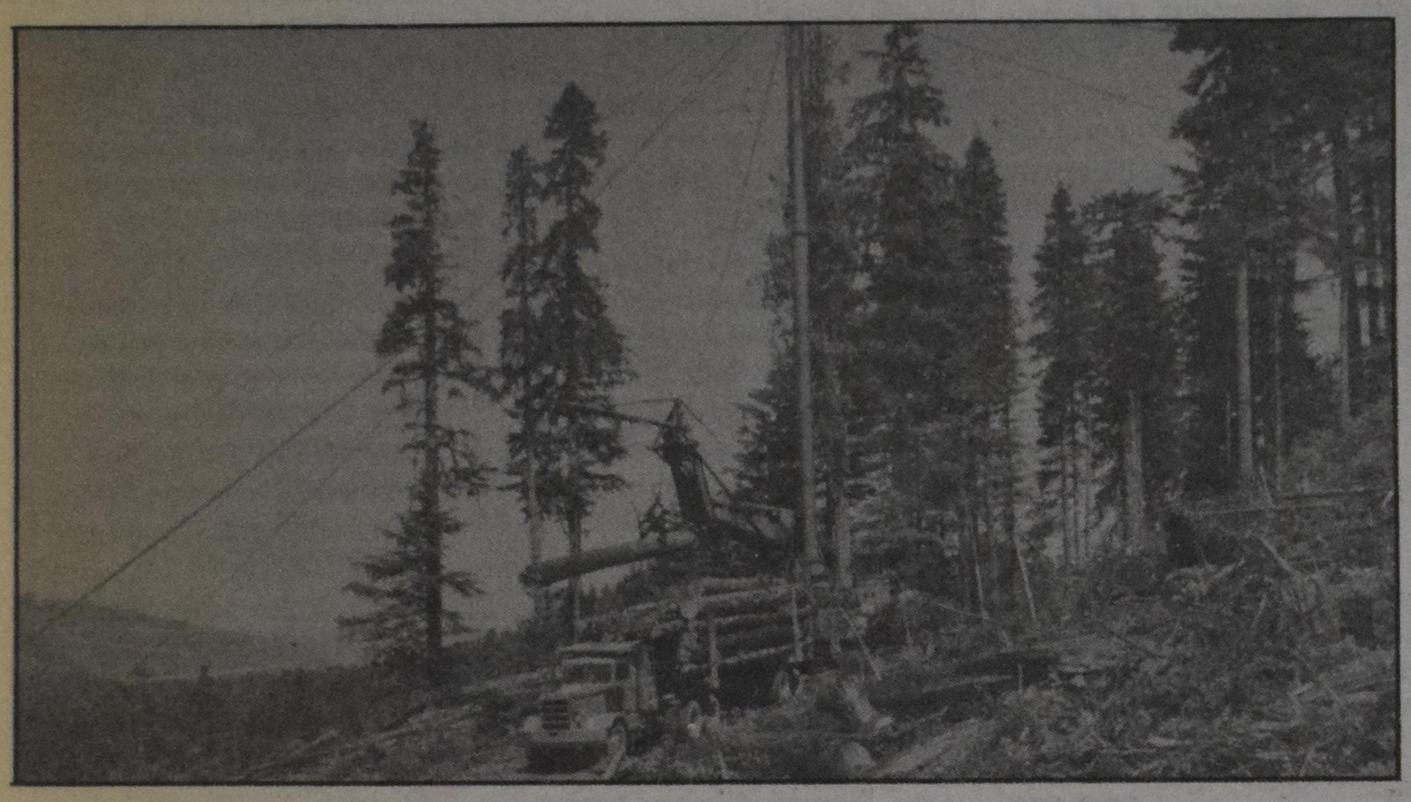

Photo: Canadian Pacific Photographic Services

"It is my opinion that with the threat of ecological disasters, such as the greenhouse effect, acid rain, and other pollution, the dangers to God's creation and to humanity are equally grave."

Bert Hielema

As a person with a constant desire to learn more about both Christianity and ecology and the covenant, I was intrigued to see these three favourite topics of mine featured in one conference sponsored jointly by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology in Madison, Wisconsin. When I saw where it was being held and who the speakers were, and ... needing an excuse for a break, we (my wife and I) decided that going to this conference was the type of vacation we wanted.

Airfares are funny things nowadays. I found out that if we stayed away a weekend, we would save $300 in flying costs. So I phoned the St. Benedict convent where the convention was being held; and, yes, they had a room for us from Saturday, October 8 to Saturday, October 15. It turned out to be a complete suite with bed- and sitting-room for only $23.85 per day!

On Sunday morning we attended the chapel service there and were handed a liturgy which contained as its first song the glorious hymn of the Reformation, "A mighty Fortress is our God." The service proceeded in a fashion which would do any Reformed church credit: a very good sermon, a beautiful liturgy, a lot of openness in the prayers, a special word of welcome to us. When I was asked to explain the purpose of the conference, the Lord granted me instantaneous words.

Apparently a group of people meets every Sunday in this chapel, an edifice so simple that not even a cross was evident anywhere. In the course of that week we went to the chapel often, as prayer services were held there three times a day, each time conducted by a different sister. The liturgy was taken from a specially compiled book and consisted of a responsive Psalm reading, a hymn, a Bible passage with a solo singer and a chanted response, the Word of the Day (that week taken mostly from the book of Ephesians) followed by a leading and communal prayer.

It was plain that the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical orders have centuries of experience in conducting edifying services. When I was back in our own church, I was somewhat taken aback by the casual and individualistic approach to our responsive reading, something which really had not bothered me before.

Impressive range

The list of speakers at the nference was impressive and gathered from a worldwide range and included Drs. Walter Brueggemann, Calvin De Witt, Douglas Hall from Mc Gill Montreal, Milan Opocensky from Prague, James Van Hoeven from Geneva, Nicholas Wolterstorff, who still divides his time teaching at the Free University in Amsterdam and Calvin College, Grand Rapids, just to mention six of the 10 speakers.

It is beyond my competence to summarize the 10 different addresses of 90 minutes each, some, in printed form more than 40 pages in length, yet the titles of some will give an idea of their scope:

— The disintegration of Creation: Facing Up to the Threats of Life on Earth.
— The Integrity of Creation and the Social Nature of God.
— Covenanting for God's Justice in a Broken World.
— Covenant, Creation and the New Creation.
— The Covenant as Alternative Community, Land and Justice.
— Until Justice, Peace and Creation Embrace.

On the plane back and in the week following the conference, I read six of the 10 papers immediately available. Together with my notes on the other four, I had a fairly accurate picture of what was said. I will try to convey my impressions, however biased and based on my interests and my priorities and my philosophic — religious position.

In general, I was struck by the concern the speakers had for creation and the sanctity of scripture. I was also impressed with the scholarship of all of them. Something that stuck with me was a remark made by Dr. Opochenski from Prague who said, "In 20 years time the now East/West confrontation will be seen as an historic event." I agree with him. The more important issue is not the capitalistic/communistic confrontation, but — and these are my words — the war we all are waging on the environment.

Love for his work

It is my opinion that the command "to love God above all," which is the first commandment, implies not only love for God because He has redeemed us, but also love for His creation. When we say (and these are my thoughts), "I love Rembrandt," we don't mean that we love his personality or his features, but his paintings, the works of his hands. When we say, "I love Bach, or von Karajan, or Mother Teresa," then we don't mean that we love them as our neighbours, but in the first place for the music they composed or interpreted or the works of charity they do.

And so it is with God. When we say we love God, then we also love the works of his hands, his works of art, as Paul calls them in the letter to the Ephesians. God is so much one that he is what he says, he is what he does, and he is what he creates. So to say mindlessly, "I love the Lord," and not care for his creation is inconsistent.

Based on this, another remark made by Opocenski makes sense: He said that the division of Christians is no longer along denominational lines, but between Christians with and without a social and environmental consciousness. This remark tied in with what other speakers said, in particular Dr. Hunziker, who referred to a "status confessionis," *a situation so urgent and so unexpected in which nothing less than the truth of the gospel and the fundamental identity of the church are at stake.*

A *status confessionis* occurs whenever a set of beliefs and practices which blatantly contradict the gospel are openly represented and theologically justified by a dominant or significant segment of the church.

Hunziker, who spoke on "Covenanting for God's Peace in a Nuclear Age," wondered whether the refusal by the church to speak out against nuclear weapons could not bring us to such a state. His question, "Can a church which accepts such (nuclear) schemes, which justifies them or which hesitates and otherwise acquiesces in them still be considered to have retained its identity as the church?"

Environmental crisis

It is my opinion that with the threat of ecological disasters, such as the greenhouse effect, acid rain, and other pollution, the dangers to God's creation and to humanity are equally grave. A *status confessionis,* involving only nuclear weapons, is insufficient, I think.

Dr. Wesley Granberg Michaelson — a former assistant to U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield and former editor of *Sojourner* magazine — had just come from the latest conference on the greenhouse effect in Washington, and said that even if the entire world would revert back to a lifestyle prior to the Industrial Revolution, the momentum involving the greenhouse effect would still cause the earth to warm up by possibly as much as 2.5 degrees Celsius, giving warmer temperatures than the human race has ever experienced.

This warming would lead to much higher sea levels as well as drastically shifting weather patterns. And since 80 per cent of the world's population live in coastal areas, the flooding and consequent migration of billions of people would have disastrous effects on especially the poor of the earth.

Yet, these changes are primarily caused by the activities of the rich nations. He wondered, "Will the warming trend undo the dependability of creation, where we no longer can count on the rain to make the crops grow and no longer count on the sand on the seashore to delineate the boundaries of the seas?"

It is my opinion that environmental threats like these should lead to *"status confessionis,"* to a state of penitence for the harm we all have caused to God's creation.

Another, for me important, consciousness-jerking lecture was given by Dr. Cynthia Campbell, who talked on "the Church as Sign of the 'New Covenant' Creation," and in particular singled out the Trinity. So much has lately been said about the humanity of Christ, that her well-spoken words on the co-equality and total harmony and instantaneous communicational rapport between the three persons of the Trinity made me realize that Jesus Christ's divinity was greater and his humanness more humiliating and thus his sacrificial death took on new significance for me.

These are but a few snapshots of the conference.

What more did I learn? Find out next week in my second article.

Bert Hielema is a real estate appraiser living in Tweed, Ont.

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Thanks

KOOISTRA:
Janette and Rem Kooistra express their heartfelt thanks to their children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for making the celebrations of the 45th anniversaries of marriage and ordination into such unforgettable events for us. Many who could not come personally, sent us their congratulations by mail. These cards made a beautiful panorama. Above all we thank our faithful God and Father for blessing us so richly.

BAKER:
"Children are a heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward." (Ps. 127:3)
Praise God for new life! He has blessed our family with the birth of our fourth child, PHILIP JOEL, on Dec. 20, 1988. Philip is a brother for Seth, Ava, and Jared, the 38th grandchild for Mrs. A.C. Buesink of Strathroy, the 8th grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. H. Baker of Sarnia, and the 13th great-grandchild for Mrs. S. Greidanus of Edmonton.
Grateful parents are Stan and Bernice Baker, 317 Queensdale Ave. E., Hamilton, ON L9A 1L3.

Marriages

BASTIAN-GROEN:
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Bastian of Vaudreuil, Que., and Mr. and Mrs. Allan Groen of Edmonton are pleased to announce the marriage of their children

MANJA ELIZABETH
to
ALLAN

The ceremony will take place, D.V., Feb. 25, 1989, at 2 p.m. in First Chr. Ref. Church of Montreal, Rev. William Kuurstra and Rev. Allan Groen officiating.
Future address: Edmonton
Correspondence address: 100 White, Vaudreuil, PQ J7V 5V5.

Marriages

WEIMA-BAKKER:
It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name O most high, to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night." (Ps. 92:1,2)
Believing that God in his wisdom has brought them together, we rejoice in the marriage of our parents

HANNA WEIMA
to
EELKE BAKKER

The wedding will take place on Saturday, Feb. 4, 1989, at 2 p.m. in Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Brockville, Ont.
We, their children, praise God for his love shown to them and pray that he will continue to bless them in their new life together.
Future address: R.R.#3, Navan, ON K4B 1J1.

Anniversaries

1944 February 9 1989
With gratitude to God we announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our dear parents

LEENDERT B. and WOUTRIENA J. NUGTEREN
(nee De Ruiter)

We are thankful for the blessing they have been, and still are, in our lives. Their thankful children and grandchildren:
Ed & Tina Westerhof
Jennifer, Linda, Michael, Karen, John
Cliff & Rose Buitenhuis
Hilda, Leo, Julie, Alison
Stuart & Cory Siderius
Janette, Leonard, Tina, Andrew
Albert & Nellie Mulder
David, Andrea, Brian, Robert
Archie & Mariann Nugteren
Erica, Leah
Larry & Irene Nugteren
Open house will be held at Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, Landsdown Ave., Woodstock, Ont. on Saturday, Feb. 11, 1989, from 2-4 p.m.

1939 February 23 1989
With joy and thanksgiving to God for his faithfulness, we are happy to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents

JANE and STUART VANDERVAART
(nee Dijkstra)

Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren:
Bob Vandervaart — Windsor, Ont.
Brian, Reny, Wendy and Stuart Vandervaart — Dartmouth, N.S.
Jellie, Peter, Jeffrey and Janette Kingma — Innerkip, Ont.
Woodstock, Ont.
Best wishes only.
Correspondence address: Rainbow Village, 37634 Crimson Lane, Zephyrhills, Florida, U.S.A. 34248.

Obituaries

January 15, 1989
"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."
The Lord called home to himself our very dear friend

CATHARINE ANDEWEG

May the assurance that she is with the Lord, and without pain forever, be a comfort to all her friends.
From Parkside Village, Belleville, Ont.

For Rent

For rent: three bedroom condo in Ingersoll, Ont. Airconditioned and appliances. Call (416) 774-3477.

Obituaries

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever." (Ps. 89)
On Jan. 9, 1989, the Lord called home to himself our beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

WIETSKE SYTSMA
(nee Nicolai)

in her 78th year.
Dearly loved wife of Dirk Sytsma for 50 years.
Dear mother of:
Betty & Wietze Terpstra — Chilliwack, B.C.
Rena & John VanderMey — Prescott, Ont.
Rita & Dick VanSpriel — Athens, Ont.
Sidney & Joanne Sytsma — Mallorytown, Ont.
Charlie & Kim Sytsma — Athens, Ont.
Rick & Liz Sytsma — Guelph, Ont.
Sadly missed by 23 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.
Dear sister of Wikke VanderBijl of Rotterdam, the Neth.
Funeral service was held in the Athens Chr. Ref. Church on Thursday, Jan. 12, 1989, Rev. G. Bieze officiating.
Home address: R.R. #3, Athens, ON K0E 1B0.

On Monday, Jan. 16, 1989, it pleased the Lord to call home at the age of 70 years our dear brother-in-law and uncle

GERRIT (George) VAN LENTHE

of Dundas, Ont.
Beloved husband of Tine Van Lenthe (nee Veldstra).
We pray that the Lord will comfort Tine, the children and grandchildren with the words of Isaiah 41:10: "So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
Lovingly remembered by:
Sid & Hilda Veldstra — St. Catharines, Ont.
Albertus & Jansje Veldstra — Fruitland, Ont.
John & Shirley Veldstra — Hamilton, Ont.
Itske & Nelly Veldstra — Cayuga, Ont.
nieces and nephews.

On Sunday, Jan. 15, 1989, the Lord called home

CATHARINA CAROLINA ANDEWEG

in her 78th year. Beloved wife of the late Cornelis Andeweg.
Mother of:
Audrey (Mrs. Wayne Slimmon) — Orono, Ont.
Thea Andeweg — Rexdale, Ont.
Tom Andeweg — Trenton, Ont.
Sister of:
Mrs. S. van der Jagt-de Waart — the Neth.
The funeral took place on Jan. 18, 1989, at the Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church, Trenton, Ont., the Revs. John Visser and Repko Popma officiating.
Romans 8:31-39

For Sale

The Bible and Islam
by Rev. Bassam Madany
($4.95 Canada / $3.95 U.S.). How to relate the gospel relevantly to the Muslim heart and mind. Also available — essays on Understanding the Middle East ($1.00).

Write:
The Back to God Hour
P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON
L7R 3Y8

Teachers

BRESLAU: Woodland Christian High School invites applications for September 1989 in all sciences 9-OAC, English 9-OAC, and part-time special ed. Write: Woodland Chr. High School, R.R.#1, Breslau, ON N0B 1M0. Phone (519) 648-2114.

BURLINGTON: Trinity Christian School Burlington, Ont. has possible openings for teachers in the **Junior** and **Intermediate** divisions. Please send resume to: Trinity Christian School, 650 Walkers Line, Burlington, ON L7N 2E7.

OTTAWA: Ottawa Christian School invites responses from suitably qualified applicants for September 1989. A vacancy is anticipated at the **lower primary** level and two in the **upper elementary** level. Teachers whose specialties are **French** or **physical education** are of special interest to us. Please send applications or letters of inquiry to: William Van Dyke, Principal, Ottawa Christian School, 2191 Benjamin Ave., Ottawa, ON K2A 1P6 or phone (613) 722-5836.

OWEN SOUND: Timothy Christian School has a possible opening for **Grade 4 and 5** combination beginning September 1989. Interested applicants please write to: G. Bierma, Principal, 199 4th Ave. W., Owen Sound, ON N4K 4V1.

PRINCE GEORGE: Cedars Christian School situated in the centre of B.C. in the industrial city of Prince George (CSI #11) is seeking applications, one possibly for **Grade 1,** the other is a tentative **Grade 3/4** assignment. Inquiries may be sent to: Cedars Chr. School c/o Principal, 701 North Nechako Rd., Prince George, BC V2K 1A2. Phone: (604) 564-0707.

STRATHROY: John Calvin Christian School is receiving applications for a **primary grade** teacher and a **part-time French** teacher (approx. 45 per cent Grades 4-8) with some principal's relief to complete the teaching load, for the 1989-90 school year. Please contact Mr. H. Wiersema for application forms at (519) 245-1934 or (519) 289-5562 or write to 48 York St., Strathroy, ON N7G 2E3.

SASKATOON, Sask: Saskatoon Christian School is receiving applications for a **teacher/principal** for the 1989-90 school year. Grades to be taught are **6,7,8.** We are an interdenominational school, associated with Christian Schools International. We require a leader with a valid teaching certificate. Preference will be given to applicants with teaching and administrative experience. Interested applicants, please forward resume and/or inquiries to: Saskatoon Christian School, 2410 Haultain Ave., Saskatoon, SK S7J 1R3. Phone (306) 343-1494 or Wes Vanstone at (306) 374-6885.

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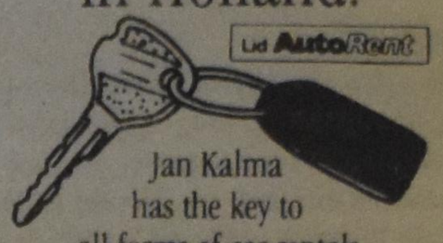

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Classifieds

Teachers

SEBRINGVILLE: Stratford District Christian School. Our school is expanding! We have need of a **Grade 3/4** teacher, beginning September 1989. At present 17 students will be in this combination class. Come to Festival City to begin or continue your teaching career. Please include all relevant material with your letter of application and send it to: Peter C. Van Manen, Principal, Stratford District Christian School, 130 Huron Rd., R.R.#1, Sebringville, ON N0K 1X0.

TERRACE: Centennial Chr. School, located in Terrace, B.C., is inviting applications for openings in **K-8** for the 1989-90 school year. Centennial Chr. School, operating since 1967, with a present enrolment of 92 students, moving into new school facilities and adding a possible Grade 8 class, will make the 89-90 school year exciting and challenging. The school, located in the beautiful Skeena Valley, offers many dynamic opportunities for teachers. For further information please contact: Frank Voogd, Principal, 3602 Sparks St., Terrace, BC V8G 2V6. Tel. (604) 635-6173.

WYOMING: The John Knox Christian School of Wyoming will have a definite opening in a **Primary or Junior** class of 25 pupils. Send your inquiries or letter of application to William Hordyk, Principal, Box 81, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0 or phone: (519) 845-3112.

Help wanted

Single or young family to work on **potato farm** in Southern Alberta. Wages depend on farm experience. Must have or be willing to obtain Class III licence. SLM Spudfarms Ltd. Phone: (403) 223-8452 or 223-8393.

Wanted: full time help on a mixed dairy operation. **Wanted immediately!** Rolling Acre Farms, R.R.#6, Cobourg, Ont. Tel. (416) 342-3131.

Rehoboth Home is in need of mature, dedicated, Christian women or married couple to serve as **house parents**. This Christian maternity home is located in Springfield, Ont. (25 miles southeast of London). For more information please call Tracy Kuipers at (519) 773-3704.

The Huron District Christian Secondary School Society seeks application for a resourceful and creative person to assess the feasibility of a Christian high school in the Clinton area and possibly prepare a working model of such a school. Please send resume to: Margaret Buffinga, Secretary, R.R.#1, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0.

Thunder Bay Chr. Community Centre is seeking a unique individual to co-ordinate their present outreach ministry. Duties include: continuing and expanding existing programs or activities for children and adults and creating new programs. Being able to deal with adults and children from all walks of life such as Native Canadians would be an asset. Send resume to: Bob Bolt, R.R.#3, Tenth Side Rd., Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V2.

Single person to work on large row crop farm in Southern Alberta. Must have references. Mobile home supplied. Phone (403) 345-4200 or write: Box 1314, Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0.

Help wanted on dairy farm. Suitable for husband and wife team or single person. Strictly looking after dairy herd. Three-bedroom house available. Call (519) 696-2659.

Teachers

Toronto Central Christian School

invites applications for a

TEACHING PRINCIPAL

TO BEGIN September 1989

TCCS is a small interdenominational school located in downtown Toronto. We have three classes with multi-grades from K-8. We are looking for an experienced, energetic person, willing to teach multiple grades and be the administrator. Interest and knowledge about teaching with an integrated curriculum is necessary. French and music skills would be an asset.

Are you looking for a challenge?

Send your letter and resume to:
G. Dekker
Toronto Central Christian School
55 Salisbury Ave., Toronto, ON M4X 1C5
Tel: (416) 968-2036 or call evenings (416) 466-6304

Jarvis District Christian School

invites applications for the following positions effective

September 1989:

Grade 2 with about 23 pupils,
Grade 6 with about 28 pupils.
Possible vacancies also exist in junior grades.

An interest and ability to teach in the following areas would be an asset: art, French, industrial arts and music. J.D.C.S. continues to experience growth and expects an enrolment of 240 plus pupils in a 10-classroom school for the 1989/90 school year. If you are interested in joining a team of enthusiastic, dedicated Christian teachers, please send your letter of application and resume to:

Garry Glasbergen, Principal
Jarvis District Christian School
R.R.#1, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0
Phone: (519) 587-4444 (school) or 587-5374 (home)

Abbotsford Christian Schools

Providing Christian education for 650 of God's children in the heart of the beautiful Fraser Valley, Abbotsford Christian Schools invite applications from teachers certifiable in B.C. for the following openings for September, 1989:

ELEMENTARY CAMPUS
- PRIMARY — Kindergarten (Full Time) and Grades 1, 2/3, 3
- SPECIAL NEEDS — Learning Assistance/Speech Therapy, Gifted Program (Full Time Position)

SECONDARY CAMPUS
Possible openings in combination of:
- Learning Assistance
- Bible
- English
- Art
- Math

Send applications, resume and references to:

HENRY CONTANT, Principal
Abbotsford Christian Elementary
Box 175,
Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N8
(604) 859-5167

DWIGHT MOODIE, Principal
Abbotsford Christian Secondary
Box 157,
Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N8
(604) 859-5528

Central Alberta Christian High School Society

Lacombe, Alberta, anticipates the beginning of a Christian high school in September 1989. Inquiries are invited from experienced, devoted, versatile and hard-working teachers who would be involved in the organization of programs, facilities, promotion and curriculum development. Submit all inquiries or resumes to:

John Busaan, R.R.#1, Blackfalds, AB T0M 0J0
phone: (403) 885-4416
or
Mrs. Grace Stolte, R.R.#1, Blackfalds, AB T0M 0J0
phone: (403) 885-4235

Immanuel Christian School

Charlottetown, P.E.I.

invites applications for the position of

TEACHING PRINCIPAL

for Sept. 1989

ICS is interdenominational with grades 1-6 and has been operational for three years. The successful applicant should have both training and teaching experience in Christian education. If you feel qualified to accept this leadership challenge please send resume and references to:

Recruiting committee c/o Immanuel Christian School
P.O. Box 1991, Charlottetown, P.E.I., Canada C1A 7N7
Phone (902) 892-9781

Teachers ... are you interested in:

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Heritage Christian School, Lindsay, Ont., invites your application for **junior/intermediate** positions, beginning September 1989. Please contact:

G. Brock, Principal
130 Colborne St. W., Lindsay, ON K9V 3T5
Tel. (705) 324-8363

Alliston Community Christian School

has a full-time opening at the primary level.

The successful applicant will be fully responsible for the Kindergarten program (about 15 students) which will take up 50 per cent of the week. The other 50 per cent will involve working with the Grade 1 and 2 teacher on a team-teaching basis. For further information write or phone:

J. Lunshof, Principal
Alliston Community Christian School
P.O. Box 1122, Alliston, ON L0M 1A0
Phone: (705) 435-4611

Taber Christian School

operated by the Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta is in need of a teaching

PRINCIPAL

for the 1989/90 school term. Prospective applicants should have both teaching and administrative experience in Christian education.

The school, an attractive, new facility, has been in operation for the past four years, providing Christ-centred education to students in kindergarten through grade nine. If you feel qualified to accept this leadership challenge please direct your letter of application to:

Mr. Arie Veluw, President
Society for Christian Education
in Southern Alberta
802 — 6 Avenue North
Lethbridge, Alberta
T1H 0S1
Telephone: (403) 738-4458 or (403) 327-4223

Classified/News

Teachers	Teachers	Help wanted	Help wanted	Lost and found

Maranatha Christian Academy

An interdenominational Christian elementary school, invites applications for the position of

TEACHING PRINCIPAL

This is a full-time position, involving administrative and teaching responsibilities.
Please send resume to:

Maranatha Christian Academy
2440 Virginia Park, Windsor, ON N9E 2B4
Attention: Chairman Education Committee
Tel. (519) 966-7424

Calvin Christian School

245 Sutton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2G 0T1
Due to continuing growth and the imminent expansion of the facilities we are soliciting applications for the following positions:

Grade 2, Grade 4, and Grade 5

A strong possibility for an additional

jr. high (7-9) teacher

also exists. We currently have 274 students and a staff of 15 who are ably assisted by two remedial teachers and classroom aides.
Construction of the new facilities will commence, D.V., March 1, 1989, and when completed an additional 15,000 sq. feet will have been added to the present facilities.
Interested applicants should send their letters and resume to Mr. John Doornbos, Principal, at the above address or phone (204) 338-7981 for further information.

Clinton and District Christian School needs an experienced

teacher for the senior grades

commencing September 1989
Ability to teach physical education and/or music is an asset.
The possibility to combine this position with the

vice-principalship

is open. Interested persons please send resume to:
Mr. Ralph Schuurman, Principal
Clinton and District Christian School
P.O. Box 658, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0
For information you can call the principal at
(519) 482-7851 (school) or (519) 482-7088 (home)

Help wanted	Help wanted

Christian Cottage Imports
Division of Son Catchers Renewal Crafts
seeks

Executive Director

Half-time / Possible Full-time Position
Primary responsibility to promote and develop marketing opportunities in Canada for cottage industry handcrafts from CRWRC sponsored income generation projects.

Please apply in writing to:
Christian Cottage Imports
P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
For additional information call (416) 366-8698

PLANTECH CONTROL SYSTEMS

A leader in the environmental control of greenhouses has a need for a professional

SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Sales and industry experience is a must. Technically minded individual would be an asset. Excellent benefit package. Salary to commensurate with experience and ability. This is a good opportunity to join a growing company with an excellent track record. Send resume to:

PLANTECH CONTROL SYSTEMS
South Service Road
P.O. Box 800
Vineland Station, Ontario
L0R 2E0

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF HAMILTON—WENTWORTH
Invites Applications for

FOSTER HOME PARENTS

TO OPERATE OUR NEWLY PURCHASED, SPACIOUS FOSTER HOME FOR UP TO SIX CHILDREN.

This challenging position provides you with an opportunity to be part of a committed team of professionals meeting the needs of children who require a home away from home. The agency will provide support and training as well as a daily per diem rate of $34.05 for each child in the home.

QUALIFICATIONS PREFERRED

Parent(s) experienced in fostering or working with teen and latency-aged children. Training in child care would be an asset.
If you are interested, please call Al Karsten (416) 522-1121 or respond in writing to:

Placement Resource Unit
Children's Aid Society of Hamilton-Wentworth
P.O. Box 1107, Station "A", Hamilton, ON L8N 4B9

REQUIRED IMMEDIATELY!
Accountant

by a small but growing accounting firm in the Niagara Peninsula. Our client base consists of small and medium size industrial, commercial, agricultural and individual accounts.
The applicant should possess a working knowledge of the Income Tax Act as it relates to Corporations, partnerships and individuals. He or she should be able to handle most client files, and should have good communication skills. A degree or designation is not a prerequisite, although it would be helpful.
Letters, including educational and professional background, salary requirements and approximate availability date should be sent to:

File #2513
Calvinist Contact
261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4,
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta
invites applications for a

Research and Policy Co-ordinator

Responsibilities include co-ordinating Federation efforts in research and policy development, public affairs and membership development.

Qualifications: Working knowledge of agricultural issues, excellent communication ability (both written and oral), strong analytical and interpersonal skills and commitment to forwarding the Federation's goals and purposes.

Salary commensurate with experience and CFFA's salary grid. Job description available.

Please submit letter of application, resume and references by March 6, 1989, to:

CFFA, Gus Polman
10766-97 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 2M1
(403)428-6981

Found an engagement ring on the parking lot of Kemptville Chr. Ref. Church. Phone (613) 258-5352.

Calendar of Events returns next week

Animals are struggling

(Canadian Scene) — There has been more disturbing evidence of the spread of toxic chemicals in our environment.

In southeastern Ontario dioxins have been found in the filters of the water-treatment plants of Odessa and Desoronto. These two small towns near Lake Ontario west of Kingston were equipped last year with new improved filters in an experiment by the Ontario Ministry of Environment. A biologist in the department, Brendan Birmingham, says there was no doubt that dioxins would be found in the water because dioxins are everywhere, and some of them are more dangerous than others.

"We are surrounded on all sides by toxic substances," says Birmingham. "What determines risk is the level of exposure. The level we have found so far is manageable."

Environmentalists, however, are not as optimistic. They are sounding a general alarm about damaging effects on wildlife of the poisonous chemicals employed so freely in herbicides and pesticides.

The general secretary of the Wildlife Toxicology Fund, Peggy Dover, says that "toxic chemicals are having a disastrous effect on wildlife all across the country. Fish, fowl, animals, even insects, are having a struggle just to survive."

For example, caribou in Wood Buffalo National Park, which straddles the border between Alberta and the Northwest Territories, are so seriously affected by radiation from the Chernobyl disaster that most of their calvings are stillborn. And the chemical spray used to combat grasshopper plagues on the prairies has reduced the population of owls in the region. The owls live mainly on mice, and when the owls are gone, a new toxic chemical will have to be produced to control the mouse population.

Environmentalists say that invariably, sprays used to combat grasshoppers are of a far higher toxicity than others available and just as effective.

Events/Classified

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

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Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4

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For detailed information write to:

ICS by Correspondence
229 College Street, Suite 401
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4

Crossword Puzzle returns next issue.

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Accepted
— to Burdett, Alta., Cand. Thomas Bomhof.

Declined
— to First, Sarnia, Ont., Rev. Peter Borgdorff of Bethany, Holland, Mich.
— to First, St. Thomas, Ont., Rev. Jacob A. Quartel of Faith, Burlington, Ont.

Change of worship time
— First, Hamilton, Ont. is now holding its evening service at 6 p.m. (not 7 p.m.)

Address change
— Rev. Harry A. VanderWindt, 759 2nd Ave. W., Owen Sound, ON N4K 2M4; (519) 376-6264; effective Feb. 8, 1989.

PREPARE FOR GLORY
ALL ONTARIO Y.C. CONVENTION
OTTAWA 1989

Come and join us at the 15th Annual All-Ontario Convention "PREPARE FOR GLORY" May 19-22, 1989 at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario

Are you ready for Christ's "thief-in-the-night" return? Discover how you can prepare yourself and others, with His power, for His glorious second coming! Register now for an exciting weekend of great Christian bands, sports, inspiring speakers, and the incredible fun and fellowship that's only possible when more than 500 young people come together!

The registration fee is $130; a $10 discount applies if you are a dues-paying member of your society. After Feb. 15 you will be charged a late fee of $15. Registration closes March 15, 1989.

See your society secretary for your registration form. For more information, contact your league's Planning Committee reps, or call:

Agnes VanDyke
Planning Committee Chairperson
(519) 745-3371

Doug Vandekamp
Publicity and Printing
(416) 491-5886

REGISTER NOW FOR THIS TERRIFIC WEEKEND!!

25th anniversary celebration

You are invited to the 25th anniversary celebration of

Trinity Christian Reformed Church

St. Catharines, Ont., Canada. Join us for a thanksgiving celebration on:
Friday, February 10, 1989 at 7:30 p.m.
Rev. R.J. Sikkema officiating
Sunday, February 12, 1989 at 10 a.m. church service
Rev. H. Jonker officiating
at 4:30 p.m. church service
Rev. J. Hellinga officiating
at 6:30 p.m. a light supper will be served.

As an anniversary project we have produced a cassette tape of congregational singing with Christiaan Teeuwsen on organ and Stuart Laughton on trumpet. This tape can be purchased for $8.00. Order yours by calling Lisa Ybema, (416) 935-3497.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Please use this form and allow four weeks for processing request.

Attach your present label here.

please print

Name: _____

New Address: _____

City: _____ Prov.: _____ Code: _____

Mail to:
CALVINIST CONTACT
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

New address is in effect
_____
(Date)

Help wanted	Help wanted

Calvin Chr. Ref. Church, Ottawa, Ont.
is seeking a

youth pastor

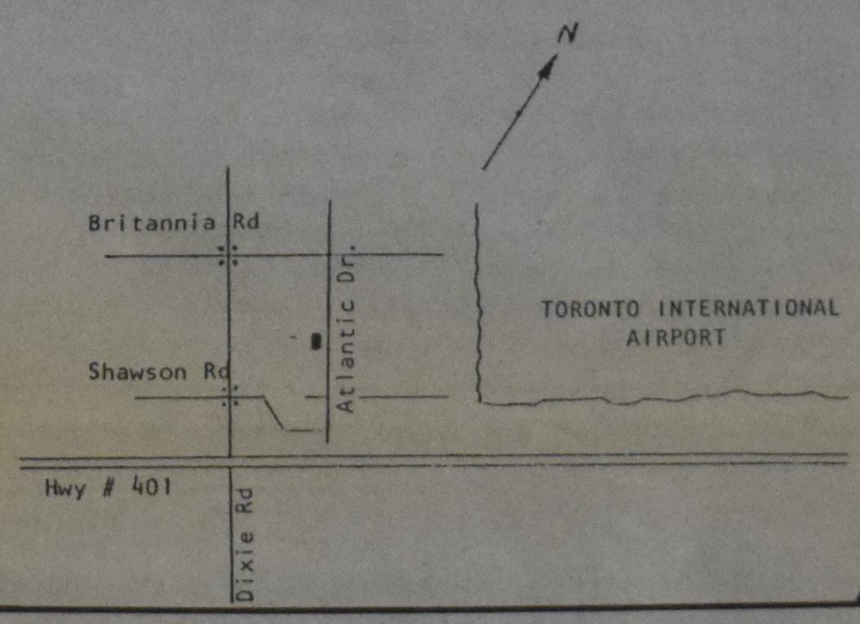
We invite those who are interested to write or call Anky Bergmans, Chairperson, Search Committee., 99 Canter Blvd., Nepean, ON K2G 2M6. Phone: (613) 224-1250 after 6 p.m.
Job description and further information available on request.

Christian Labour Association of Canada

INAUGURATION OF ITS NEW HEAD OFFICE and OPEN HOUSE

On Saturday, March 4, 1989, the Christian Labour Association of Canada will have an **Open House** at its new Head Office building in Mississauga, Ontario from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. At 2:00 p.m. there will be a brief ceremony in which we will officially open the new facilities and thank God for his goodness towards CLAC during the past 37 years. We invite all members and friends of CLAC, as well as all those who in one way or another contributed towards the new building to come and celebrate with us.
Refreshments will be served.

The address is: 5920 Atlantic Drive, Mississauga (at the northwest corner of Hwy #401 and Dixie Road)



DUTCH SERVICE
PLACE: Ancaster CRC, #70 Highway 53 East, Ancaster (approx. 2 km. west of Redeemer College)
DATE: Sunday, Feb. 5, 1989 **TIME:** 3:00 p.m.
PASTOR: Rev. Henry R. DeBolster

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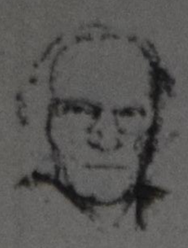
Call: (416) 461-1207 evenings
or
Write: Christian Reformed Church Extension Fund
45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1

Dutch



Pensive Dutchie

Syrt Wolters

Ervaringen van nieuwe immigranten

Volgens het schema wat me door de redacteur toegezonden is, mag ik nog drie keer een bijdrage in het Nederlands insturen. Vanaf 1 april schakelt Calvinist Contact voor 100 procent over naar de Engelse taal. Het was te verwachten. Het aantal lezers dat geen Engels kan lezen, wordt gaandeweg minder.

'k Heb me voorgenomen om de laatste drie keer te gebruiken om enkele vroegere ervaringen van immigranten door te geven.

De eerste betreft een droef verhaal; een verhaal, hoe droef het ook is, dat ons laat zien dat humor een genade gave Gods is.

Toen ik nog ploegbaas was aan de "Houston Planer Co" waren er verschillende Nederlandse immigranten die daar werkten, allemaal kersvers van Nederland. Doorgaans waren het goede werkers, lui waar je op aan kon en die je rustig alleen kon laten werken.

Een leuke vent

Eén van die werklui was een Fries van achter in de dertig. Een sterke kerel en een guitige gast. Als hij iemand onschuldig in het ootje kon nemen liet hij het vast niet na. Hij was erg gezien bij z'n kameraden.

Hij was ook een harde werker. Op een keer kwam hij naar me toe en vroeg of hij met nog een andere werker het opstapelen van de planken niet per contract kon doen. We werden het eens over de condities en voortaan was al de verantwoordelijkheid van het droog stapelen van al het hout in hun handen. Dat werkte heel goed en zij voeren er wel bij. Wietse (niet z'n echte naam) had een groot gezin; acht kinderen, de jongste was in Houston geboren.

Op een morgen vertelde hij me, dat hij wat maagklachten had en graag vrijaf wou hebben om naar Smithers te gaan om de dokter te raadplegen. Die maagklachten werden niet minder en Wietse werd in het ziekenhuis opgenomen. Niet lang daarna kwam het hoge woord er uit: Maagkanker, en hij werd naar het Kanker Instituut in Vancouver gevlogen. We hoopten allemaal dat hij na enige tijd weer terug zou komen. Maar dat gebeurde niet ....

Een telefoontje

Ongeveer tien dagen nadat hij naar Vancouver gebracht was, werd ik door het kantoor geroepen: Er was telefoon voor mij vanuit Vancouver. Wietse had mijn naam opgegeven ingeval van nood. Mij werd verteld dat Wietse die morgen plotseling was overleden en of ik z'n vrouw op de hoogte zou willen brengen.

Voor enkele ogenblikken was ik zelf totaal van de kaart: Wat? Wietse gestorven? Ogenblikkelijk trof ik enkele maatregelen, waardoor ik vrij kwam om deze droeve boodschap over te brengen. Hoe moest ik dat vertellen? Moest ik z'n vrouw voorzichtig voorbereiden? Maar hoe?

Lopend, biddend, ging ik er heen. Stel je voor: acht kinderen, waarvan de jongste nog geen anderhalf jaar is. Nieuwe immigranten die nog van de grond af moeten beginnen. Wietse droomde van een boerderij in de niet te verre toekomst! Aarzelend en schuchter klopte ik op de deur. Op haar "Kom binnen" opende ik de kamerdeur.

Ze moet haast wel wat aan me gezien hebben; misschien ook omdat ik zomaar midden op de dag bij haar kwam. Ze vroeg: Heb je van Wietse gehoord? Toen heb ik er maar geen doekjes om gewonden en haar verteld, dat ik een heel droeve boodschap had; dat ik zojuist een telefoontje uit Vancouver gekregen had met de boodschap, dat Wietse plotseling gestorven was.

'k Zal nooit vergeten hoe ze zich als een hoopje ellende op een stoel liet neerzakken en met haar hoofd op de tafel hartstochtelijk begon te huilen. 'k Wist ook niet hoe ik haar met woorden moest troosten. Wat doen woorden in zo'n situatie? 'k Ben bij haar gaan staan, m'n arm om haar heen gelegd. Na enkele minuten zei ik, dat ik één of twee andere vrouwen zou waarschuwen. Nadat ik dit gedaan had ging ik eerst weer naar m'n werk.

In een klein plaatsje als Houston ging het tragische nieuws natuurlijk als een lopend vuurtje rond.

Ontspanning

's Avonds na het avondeten zei m'n vrouw, dat het waarschijnlijk wel goed zou zijn om de jonge weduwe een bezoek te brengen; het liep tegen 9 uur en de kinderen zouden nu wel naar bed zijn. Dus zou ze alleen zijn met haar verdriet en haar gedachten. We gingen samen naar haar huis. Het licht in de kamer was aan; de gordijnen nog niet dichtgetrokken. Ze heette ons direct welkom en vond het mooi, dat we haar een poosje gezelschap hielden. Als vanzelfsprekend vonden de tranen hun vrije loop en niet alleen van haar ....

Om de spanning wat te breken zei ik, dat we Wietse zouden missen; niet alleen in de kerkgemeenschap, maar ook op het werk. Niet alleen dat hij een uitstekende werker was, maar vooral omdat hij zo'n goede invloed had op de anderen door zijn opgewekte en vrolijke natuur. En zo vertelde ik dat Wietse vaak door zijn grappen een goede geest kweekte onder de mannen. Ik vertelde een enkele anecdote en, door haar tranen heen, begon zijn vrouw te glimlachen.

Het duurde niet lang of ze zei: "Daar kan ik nog veel meer van vertellen, vooral van toen hij jonger was!" En zowaar begon ze te vertellen van moppen en grappen die Wietse vroeger uitgehaald had. En voordat we er zelf erg in hadden, schudden we alle drie van het lachen!

Plotseling stond ze op en zei: "Laat ik die gordijnen toch dicht doen; de mensen buiten zouden denken dat ik gek geworden ben!" We praatten nog even door en stonden op om weer naar huis te gaan. We wensten haar welterusten en beloofden morgen weer te komen. Bij het uitlaten zei ze: "Wat heeft me jullie bezoek goed gedaan; dat ik toch nog kon lachen — het is een zegen van de Here!"

De volgende morgen ging mijn vrouw naar haar toe om haar wat te helpen. Toen vertelde ze: "Ik heb geslapen als een blok! Dat kwam vast door jullie bezoek. Ik kon me geheel ontspannen!"

Syrt Wolters woont in Victoria, B.C.

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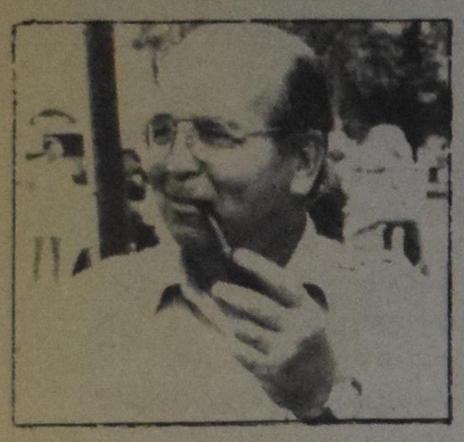

Kommentaar met een knipoog

Herman de Jong

Eenzaam, maar niet alleen

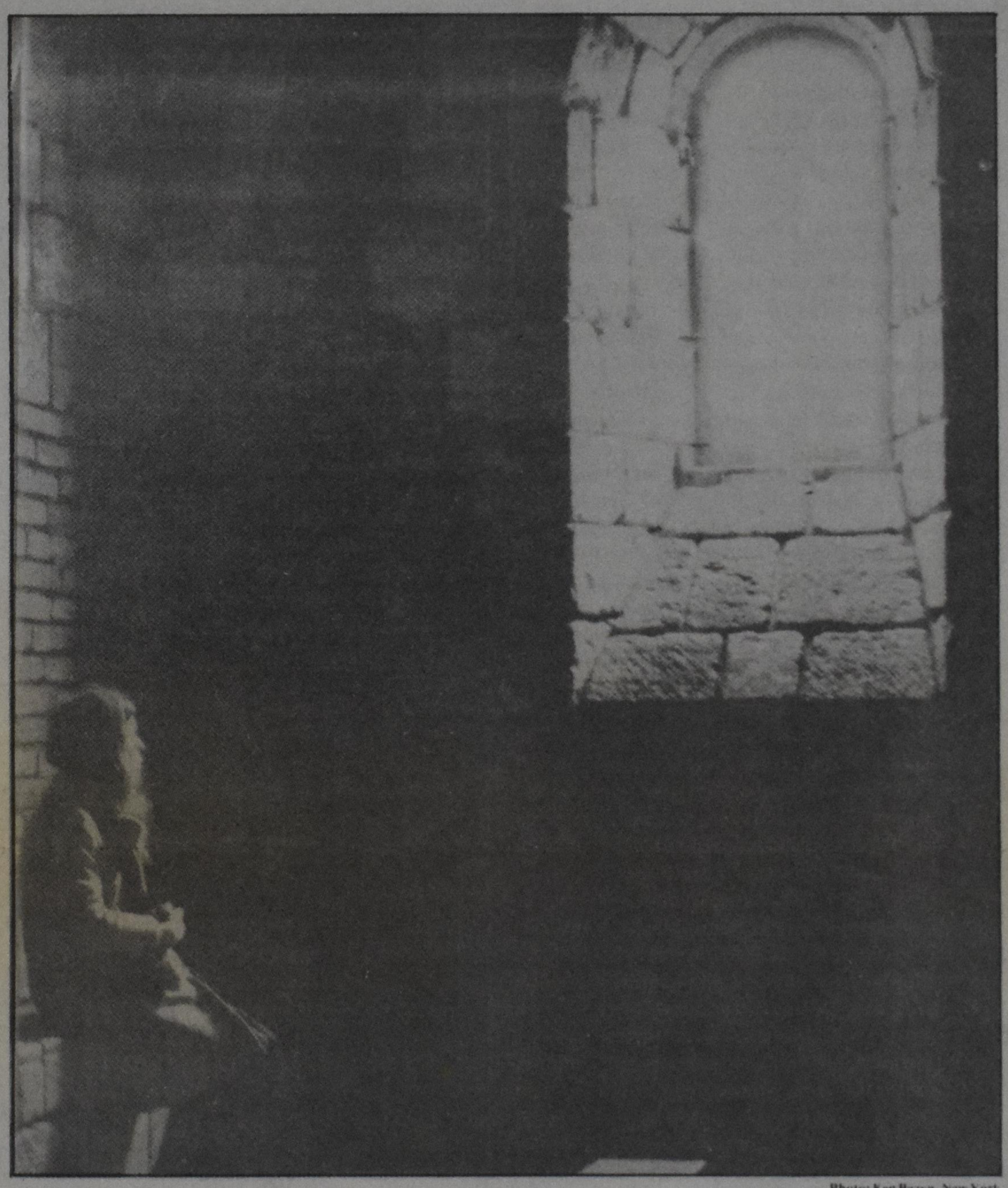

Photo: Ken Bazyn, New York

Eenzaam maar niet alleen **was de titel van een boek, geschreven door Koningin Wilhelmina. Dat kan een koningin gemakkelijk zeggen, als je altijd omringt bent door een hofhouding. We weten allen dat het "eenzaam, maar niet alleen" voor Wilhelmina een diepere betekenis had. Ze wist dat God haar nooit alleen liet. Voor een Christen wordt de eenzaamheid altijd gebroken door Jezus Christus, die aan het kruis de diepste eenzaamheid doorleefde ... maar die in zijn eigen verlatenheid van God nog de eenzaamheid van een ander begreep: "Zie uw moeder ... zie uw zoon."**

Toch, in het horizontale vlak van mens tot mens, zijn veel mensen ontzettend eenzaam. Ze voelen zich van iedereen verlaten. Ze gaan alleen door de wereld. Nu zijn er natuurlijk mensen die dat zo willen. Niet ieder mens is een gemeenschapsmens ... vooral in een cultuur waar het individualisme beschouwd wordt als een goede eigenschap, zo van: je mag er wel op rekenen dat je, als puntje bij paaltje komt, je eigen boontjes moet doppen, dat je in een harde wereld leeft en niet teveel op de belangstelling en saamhorigheid van anderen moet rekenen; wees er dan ook maar op voorbereid dat je eenzaam zult zijn en leer er mee te leven ....

Het is een vicieuze cirkel: een cultuur doorspekt met individualisme zet de mens apart, en die eenzame mens draagt zijn steentje weer bij tot een gemeenschap — en dat kan een kerk zijn — die eigenlijk geen gemeenschap meer is. Zo'n gemeenschap, zo'n kerk, is als een bos waar de takken van de bomen elkaar niet raken. Alleen als een boom valt is er enige beroering ....

En toch, diep in het eigenaardige "eigen-zijn" van de moderne mens, van de moderne Christen (we spreken hier van tijd en niet van theologie) ligt de drang tot vriendschap. Een mens moet al een harde bikkel zijn, als hij geen gemeenschapsmens zou willen zijn. Meer nog: ieder mens heeft behoefte aan liefde. En Jezus zegt vandaag nog dringender dan in andere tijden: "Zie uw moeder ... zie uw zoon." Het moet ons opvallen, dat Jezus die woorden spreekt tot twee nietige figuren, die verdrietig-eenzaam onder het kruis staan.

Ik ken een oude moeder die, na een bezoek van haar volwassen kinderen, hen bij het afscheid steevast vermaande: "Wees lief voor elkaar!" De eenvoud van deze korte zin ontroert. De kinderen kunnen elkaar inderdaad liefhebben, niet omdat moeder het zegt, maar omdat moeder hen het voorbeeld gaf: haar liefde straalt door! En zo is het met Jezus; Ik ga nu heen, maar mijn liefde zij uw liefde! Je bent nu wel eenzaam, Maria, maar niet alleen ... ik woon niet alleen in je hart, maar ook in de liefde die je zult ontvangen van mijn plaatsvervanger, Johannes.

U kent allen dat mooie vers "Make me a channel of your Peace!" Jezus' liefde voor ons straalt door ons heen, zodat wij de eenzaamheid van anderen kunnen doorbreken. In deze tijd van schrijnend individualisme wordt het steeds moeilijker plaatsvervangers te zijn van Jezus. In de eerste plaats heeft de tijdgeest ons zelf besmet, in de tweede plaats lijkt het wel of je medemens zo'n liefdevolle belangstelling te indringend vindt en niet waardeert. Vooral de verdrietige mens, die uitzag naar diep medeleven, om enkel oppervlakkige belangstelling of zelfs een "ik-ben-huiverig-om-me-met-jouw-pijn-te-bemoeien" te ervaren, pantsert zich tegen een welgemeende en vasthoudende liefdebetoning.

Veel ouders van gehandicapte kinderen zijn stilletjes de kerk uitgetreden, omdat de kerkgemeenschap hen niet opving in hun verdriet.

De door echtscheiding alleenstaande man of vrouw ondervindt hetzelfde. De weduwe en weduwnaar, die in de eerste weken na het overlijden van een geliefde toch wel getroffen waren door het meeleven van de gemeente, bemerken al gauw dat er toch iets veranderd is.

Het meisje dat te gauw ingaf en nu een baby verwacht, voelt zich met andere ogen aangekeken ... zelfs haar ouders kunnen hun verdriet niet kwijt binnen de kerkgemeenschap.

Het zwakzinnige kerklid staat er wat zielig bij als er na de dienst koffie gedronken wordt. Niemand praat met hem, omdat men vermoed dat hij het toch niet zal begrijpen.

En je zal AIDS moeten hebben in een vergadering der gelovigen ....

Ik kan me voorstellen dat al deze mensen die zo in aanraking zijn gekomen met het koude, fatsoenlijke christendom, hun verdriet en pijn en eenzaamheid spoedig capsuleren, en zich zo zullen gedragen, dat hun medegelovigen gaan denken dat er geen vuiltje meer aan de lucht is. Het zelf aangetrokken pantser van individualisme (ik zal het alleen wel dragen) laat de schreeuw naar liefde niet meer door.

De kerk van Jezus Christus kan zich bezig houden met veel dingen, maar als ze het leed binnen haar gemeenschap zo omzeilt, hoe zal ze ooit een lichtend licht en een zoutend zout voor haar omgeving kunnen zijn? Want al is het leed groot in de kerk, reken er maar op dat het leed in een wereld die Jezus niet kent, oneindig veel groter is.

Ik ben er helemaal vóór om de kerk te behoeden voor invloeden die het waarachtig geloof ondermijnen. Met een Bijbel die je niet van A tot Z kunt geloven, zet uiteindelijk de twijfel aan kruis en opstanding in. Maar als in deze strijd voor een welafgebakende pure kerk het "bezig zijn" met het leed binnen en buiten de kerk er bekaaid afkomt, zijn we toch wel echt bezig de Bijbel niet voor vol aan te nemen.

De Bijbel heeft veel woorden ... maar al die woorden omschrijven uiteindelijk de grootste liefdesdaad: dat God zijn Zoon gaf tot ons eeuwig heil. Daaruit vloeit voort, omdat wij beelden Gods zijn, dat ook wij het heil zoeken voor andere mensen. We doen er goed aan om het individualisme, dat zich zelfs toont in onze polemiek om puurheid, de kop in te drukken, en ons daadwerkelijk aan de opdracht van onze Heer en Heiland te houden: om Zijn Lichaam te zijn, dat zich inzet leed te verzachten. "A church without ministry is like a body without arms and legs."

Zie uw moeder ... zie uw zoon!

Eenzaam ... maar niet alleen!

Herman de Jong woont in Jordan Station, Ont.

Crossword Puzzle returns next issue.

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Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Daily living

Decisions about life and death

Euthanasia: Spiritual, Medical, and Legal Issues in Terminal Health Care, by Beth Spring and Ed Larson. Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1988. Paperback, $12.95 U.S. Reviewed by Rika Vander Laan, a Toronto nurse specializing in geriatric care.

This book challenges Christians to ask crucial questions which are relevant to both health care professionals and to individuals who may one day be confronted by life and death questions. The authors begin by describing current realities: an aging society, rapidly advancing medical technology and limited health care dollars. Debates about euthanasia in the '80s include issues such as withholding food and water, and difficult choices about type and extent of treatment. The questions raised today were not necessarily faced by previous generations.

Spring and Larson trace some of the critical factors that influence public opinion about euthanasia: the media, the "right to die" movement, and its offshoots such as the Hemlock Society. The Netherlands is used as an example where the practice of euthanasia is rapidly becoming acceptable. But Dutch Catholic Bishops and some Protestant theologians bring a scriptural perspective to the debate in strongly opposing the arguments put forth by proponents of euthanasia.

In North American society many of the critical questions about withdrawal of treatment or the right to die are brought to the courts for resolution. The Karen Ann Quinlan case is still fresh in most of our memories. The courts attempt to balance the conflict between the rights of the individual to refuse treatment and society's stance against suicide. Each decision sets new precedents which will be taken into consideration as new cases come to the courts. With each decision drawing the line, the grey area becomes more complex.

Avoids polarization

Current positions of ethicists and theologians are examined in this book. Conflicting issues are the principle of the sanctity of life, the quality of life or a position which attempts to bridge the two. Traditional Christian thinking is reviewed from the early Apostolic Church through the Reformation, ending with contemporary Christian views on euthanasia and suffering. At this point the authors take the discussion out of the usual polarized positions. In its place they articulate a perspective that sets off a biblically-based view from contemporary individualistic world-and-life view. They offer five significant issues: the sovereignty of God and the gift of life; healing and God's will; a Christian perspective of death; the value of suffering; and the role of the caring community.

Having summarized what they consider to be guiding principles, Spring and Larson conclude with a section entitled, "Possible Responses." This chapter addresses topics such as choosing a surrogate decision maker, living wills, hospice care and ministry to the elderly. The focus of this section is on personal decision about life and death issues that one may face.

Unfortunately, the book does not follow through with how we as Christians on a communal level should address euthanasia. Nor does it offer any helpful direction for health care providers confronted with difficult decisions on a daily basis. However, it is a book well worth reading. We should take seriously the suggestion to discuss together as families and faith communities how we might respond when confronted with difficult life-and-death choices.

Technology

Developing good stewardship of technology

Responsible Technology, Stephen V. Monsma, editor. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1986. 252 pp., $12.95 U.S.; paperback. Reviewed by Paul G. Schrotenboer, retired general secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Council.

Responsible Technology is the product of the fellows of the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It reflects the communal thinking of six academics and two students who are committed to the belief that technology, a form of cultural activity, must be done under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The book deals with a complicated subject that affects somehow, and often deeply, every aspect of our social, family and personal lives.

The book's message is that technology, in contrast with its high pretensions of offering a utopia, may become a demeaning and even enslaving force. What is needed, say the Calvin scholars, is a normative technology; that is, one which will respect the creation by developing and using it as God intends (68), will reflect love for God and neighbour by expanding opportunities for men and women to be the loving, joyful beings God intends them to be (69) and one which respects the nature and purpose God has given to the entities involved (69).

Responsible Technology bears an openly confessional character. The commitment is that the biblical teaching of human stewardship based on the central biblical story line of creation, fall and redemption can lead us out of the dangerous shoals of a technology guided by human autonomy to the true freedom of the people of God.

Offers guidance

This is a book for all who would lead responsible lives as obedient stewards — students, instructors, business people, researchers, high-tech specialists. It might well become required reading in college courses dealing with social issues.

Besides presenting a Christian perspective on one of the greatest social forces in the world today, the book demonstrates the value of sustained communal scholarship. Such a book could not have been produced by an aggregate of specialists with different life visions. Neither could it have been written on the basis of a week or ten-day conference by like-minded people. What was needed was a year's time of research, drafting, debate, and self-correction. Out of it all came a common mind and a unified articulation.

The closing paragraph admirably summarizes the thrust of the book:

Responsible technology must rest upon a servant-like commitment to love God above all and one's neighbour as oneself. It is as all of us — designers, research scientists, consumers, public policy makers, citizens, fabricators, corporate executives, journalists, scholars, and others — seek to love as Christ loved us that we will be able to live in the line of creation and redemption. We will then broaden the standards by which our technologically relevant decisions are made to simultaneously include all the biblically based normative principles, and at the same time narrow the application of the economic, the technical, the scientific, and the political.

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Unleavened bread

"They devoted themselves ... to the breaking of the bread ...." **(Acts 2:42)**

Why did Jesus break the *bread* of the Passover, and say, "This is my body!" Why not the roasted flesh? Wouldn't that have been a more fitting symbol of the atoning sacrifice of the true "Lamb of God" who takes away the sins of the world?

When Israel first celebrated Passover on the night before the people fled Egyptian slavery, God himself gave the instructions: Each of you families must select an unblemished lamb. Paint its blood over your doorway as protection from the Angel of Death who will roam the streets tonight. Roast its flesh to sustain you on the road. Drink a cup of bitter herbs to remember the tough times from which I am freeing you. And bake your bread without yeast.

Why? Why bake your bread without yeast? Certainly the rush of events wouldn't allow time to sit around waiting for dough to rise before putting it in the oven. Unleavened bread spoke of speed, haste and flight.

Organic unity

But there was something more. The Israelites didn't have the measured packets of "quick-rise" yeast that are stocked in all of our grocery markets. They baked bread via the natural fermentation method developed by the Egyptians. And in order to speed things up, a small chunk of dough from one day's bread-baking was broken off and kept in a cool place to be added to the next day's batch. The bit of old dough would increase the rate of fermentation in the new.

Yeast was good when it came to baking bread. Several of Jesus' parables talk about women hiding a little yeast in a lump of dough. It then expands like the Kingdom of God. But more often Jesus talked negatively about yeast. It was the best comparison he could think of when talking of the creeping spread of sin. "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees!" he said several times.

If baking bread involved taking a small lump of leavened dough from one batch and passing it on to the next, it was somewhat like the spread of sin in the human race. The yeast of wickedness from one generation has passed on to the next, as sinful parents begat sinful children. Sin is not merely a biological phenomenon, but clearly we receive it in the organic process of birth. We are "conceived and born in sin," as David testified (Psalm 51:5). Only some miraculous break with the past could provide a sinless context in which the human race could start over.

A miraculous conception? Exactly! Jesus Christ. Conceived by the Holy Spirit. A break with the past. He was like us in all ways, "yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15) In the successive generations of fermented society, leavened by the yeast of sin passed on from parents to children, Jesus miraculously appears as the "Unleavened Bread."

Think now of the Last Supper. It was a Passover meal. The roasted lamb, protecting the house with its blood, portrays Jesus. But once he died, it would be foolish to shed more blood as a memorial. The lamb will not do as a permanent reminder of a once-for-all atoning sacrifice.

But here's the bread. Unleavened bread. When Israel left Egypt, God said, "Get rid of all the yeast in your houses! Don't let any of the leaven of Egypt corrupt your future! The past is gone! Slavery is behind you! You are starting over! And this shall be the sign to you: *Unleavened Bread!*"

The "yeast-free society"

Of course! It makes sense! Jesus, the Unleavened Bread in the history of the sin-fermented human race, breaks the unleavened bread of the Passover and says, "*This* is my body which is broken for you! Take it! Eat it! You are part of me! You have become the new human race, the people unleavened by sin!"

Unbelievable? Listen to what the Apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 5:6-7: *Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast — as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.*

Unleavened bread? "This is my body"? Definitely!

And you? Are you still part of the sin-fermented dough? Or have you eaten of the Bread of Life, and joined the "yeast-free society"?

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.